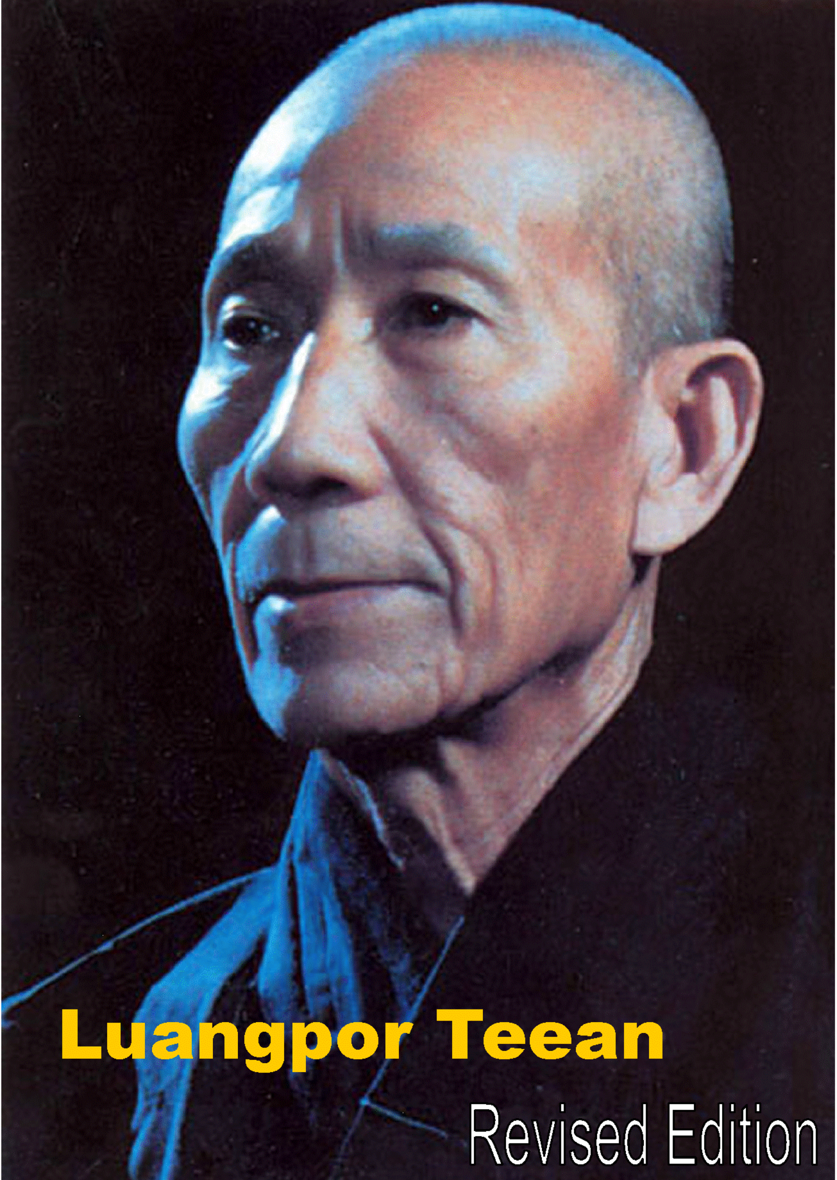
Normality





NORMALITY

Luangpor Teean (1911 – 1988) was one of the most remarkable teachers of Buddhist practice to appear in Asia in modern times. His teaching issued very directly from his own experience, intensely personal and original.

Not a scholar nor academic, but a simple man who spoke very frankly about his experiences. His method of meditation employs simple hand and arm movements as a way to increase awareness. If you are searching for ways to calm a busy mind, Luangpor Teean's gentle teaching will guide the way.

Luangpor Teean Cittasubho

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Luangpor
Teean
Cittasubho

Developing Awareness According To
The Teachings of
Luangpor Teean Cittasubho

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Luangpor Teean Cittasubho

First Printing February 2009

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A selection taken from the book
“NORMALITY” by Luangpor Teean Cittasubho
(Loo-ang por Tee-an Cittasubho)

For this book, and others books, pictures, video clips, documents, contacts and audio of L.P. Teean and disciples of his, visit: www.awarenesswithmovement.org

Printed in Thailand by:

Cornucopia Productions, Ltd.
Noland Thuss, publisher
61-63 Santitham Road, Chiang Mai,
50300 Thailand

FOREWORD

The way Luangpor Teean teaches differs somewhat from other teachings because he speaks directly from his experiences. Luangpor Teean couldn't read or write (nor speak central-Thai, only the Lao-dialect), until twelve or thirteen years before he died. Because of this lack of academic knowledge, his words don't always correspond to the accepted interpretations of those words.

One who is attached to conservative explanations, will find this unacceptable; but someone with an open mind, concerned about what is behind the words, can step over rigid views about what things mean. For example, the four Jhanas are explained in terms of the four stages of enlightenment, and 'seeing the Tathagata' as seeing oneself.

Some of these points could be seen as 'ready wit' (Pali – patibhana), and at the same time, their meaning recognized. Other things need a mature attitude of not fussing about definitions, but sincerely opening up to what Luangpor is trying to convey.

It is unlikely that it will escape the reader's attention that Luangpor Teean was a simple man who spoke very frankly about his experiences, and the reason he did so seems rather obvious. With confidence one is liable to open up the mind more and come closer to what Luangpor is pointing to.

To have an open mind is exactly what awareness is about: to receive anything that appears or occurs in the present whether it is a sensation due to movements, breathing, the eyes blinking, the knee resting on the floor, a breeze touching the skin or even sound and visual phenomena. We hear and see them in the present, don't we? As long as the mind doesn't proliferate, all of this can be used as more objects of awareness. They are not obstacles.

That's a different attitude than training in concentration, where the mind is narrowed down to one point. But Samadhi is the establishing of the mind; and we can establish the mind in awareness every second of the day because movements, as well as this practice, are natural.

the translator

Developing Awareness According To
The Teachings of
Luangpor Teean Cittasubho

NORMALITY

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Parts 1, 2 and the Conclusion, are translations from the book 'Plik Lok – Neu–a Kwahm Kit' (Turn Over The World – Beyond Thought).
The Supplement is a translation from the book 'Pokati' (Normality).

Walking The Path

Taking a Shortcut

Today the monks, novices and lay people are meeting here in order to study the method to develop meditation. We're not interested in anything else because we've done it already. For example, making merit, being generous, upholding precepts and doing tranquility–meditation. As for insight–meditation, we've heard about it, but we don't yet understand, or we've only practiced it a little bit. Therefore, before we start practicing insight–meditation, we have to rely on listening and reading from scriptures before we understand what tranquility–meditation is and what insight–meditation is.

Developing Awareness is The Path That the Buddha Teaches

(Things Outside of Buddhism)

Making merit, being generous, keeping precepts and doing tranquility–meditation are a pair with the world. Whether there is a Buddha or there is no Buddha, these things exist anyway.

When prince Sidhartha was born, Brahmins were assiduously looked after, which is making merit and offerings. As for tranquility–meditation, it's a matter of psychic powers, a matter of ambition. We've probably heard about becoming invisible, flying through the air, diving into the earth, reading other people's minds, multiplying oneself, reciting magical verses to obstruct vision, and hearing by entering absorption. This in not insight.

According to the Buddha's biography, when prince Sidhartha ordained, he studied with the hermit Alara and

mastered seven absorptions; four form–absorptions and three formless–absorptions. But suffering still existed. That is to say, there was still greed, hatred and delusion. He was not satisfied with this and so studied with the last teacher, the hermit Uddaka, until he mastered the eight absorptions; four form–absorptions and four formless–absorptions. The hermit said: "That's as much as I know." But the prince was still not satisfied because there was still greed, hatred and delusion. He wasn't liberated from suffering yet.

This shows that tranquility is not able to put an end to suffering. After this, the prince tormented himself, together with the five ascetics who were following him. He fasted until his body was so thin that it was just skin over his bones, and he held his breath. But even after doing all this, greed, hatred, delusion, satisfaction and dissatisfaction still persisted. There were still defilements.

(Things inside Buddhism)

So the prince gave up those methods and started to eat fruit. Because of this, the five disciples avoided and eventually left him; so he practiced by himself. Having eaten some rice offered by Miss Sujata, his body recovered strength. He reflected on the various methods that he had been practicing but which were not capable of shaking off the defilements. He still had troubles and suffering. So the prince turned around and looked at his mind and was, at last, successful. He attained *Anuttara Sammasambodhi Nyana* and became the fully Enlightened Buddha. He was able to conquer all the defilements and to extinguish suffering, leaving only coolness. His body was back to normal and His mind was free of suffering at last. He lived with and enjoyed the happiness of awareness and wisdom. Having attained this, the Buddha shrank back from teaching, reflecting that this practice was

profound, and it would be hard to understand. So it can be taken that mind development is something difficult to do and that this is what Buddhist teaching is about. As for making merit, being generous, keeping precepts, and doing tranquility–meditation, it is not the teaching of the Buddha but a teaching of teachers at large.

(Teachings Outside of Buddhism)

There were many sects in India: some sects taught to lie roasting on fire so that defilements would dry up; some taught to lie on thorns to endure through the pain and torment that resulted from that, in order to get rid of defilements. Some sects aught to give up everything including clothes, a practice known as naked asceticism, so as to induce the feeling that there is no self, no shame. It was believed that defilements would be dissolved that way.

Altogether, there were many sects; but none of them could eliminate the defilements. This matter can easily be proven, as it is said that lying roasting on fire and drinking hot water will result in the heat burning off the defilements. In the old days, in the villages, when a woman gave birth, she would be laid down roasting above a fire and given hot water to drink. But the woman would still have defilements, showing that this sect did not achieve results. As for the sect that would have its followers give up everything and go naked, just look at a baby not wearing clothes. It still has moods and feelings; as soon as someone talks nicely, it laughs. And when someone scolds, it cries, whether naked or clothed. This shows that defilements are not in the body; they are in the mind. Therefore, to practice Dhamma we have to practice at the mind.

I will tell you so you'll understand, because I have been doing this: repeating a mantra such as Bud-dho, Samma Arahant, rising-falling, counting; 1-2-3. With these methods,

one has to sit with the eyes closed and repeat a word while watching the breath, for example, saying Bud with the in-breath and dho with the out-breath. I've done quite a lot of this, but there was still satisfaction and dissatisfaction; greed, hatred and delusion didn't diminish.

This kind of practice is called tranquility-meditation. Tranquility-meditation is not more than a means to make the mind peaceful, but it is peace under the influence of delusion. It's just like putting a rock on top of grass. As long as the rock is on top of the grass, the grass can't grow; but when the rock is removed, the grass grows just as before, or maybe even more vigorously then before. It is true that there is no *Lobha, Dosa & Moha* when we're sitting alone, with the eyes closed; but as soon as we go back into society, like and dislike are born again. This is how it is! Going off to stay in a cave in a forest or the mountains cannot extinguish suffering, just because of going to stay there. At first, I did it like that also.

(The Teachings inside Buddhism)

The word *VIPASSANA* translates as realizing and truly seeing. Seeing what? Seeing impermanence, instability and non-selfhood. When having insight, one views things differently than before. It is a transcendency. When we don't yet see clearly nor truly know, then acting, speaking and thinking are as before. It is not yet *VIPASSANA*. But when we feel differently than before – that is, greed, hatred and delusion decrease – it can be called *VIPASSANA*.

(A Handful of Leaves: Awareness)

To practice insight-meditation, the Buddha teaches us to develop four foundations of awareness, namely;

1. *KAYANUPASSANA SATIPATTHANA*, that is, to meditate on the body in the body and see according to actuality

that this body is only just a body; it's not a being, an individual, nor a self. It is neither me nor it.

2. *VEDANANUPASSANA SATIPATTHANA*, to meditate on the feelings and see according to actuality that these feelings are only just feelings; they are not a being, an individual, nor a self. They are neither me nor them.

3. *CITTANUPASSANA SATIPATTHANA*, to meditate on the mind in the mind and see according to actuality that this mind is only just mind; it is not a being, an individual, nor a self. It is neither me nor it.

4. *DHAMMANUPASSANA SATIPATTHANA*, to meditate on the mental objects in the mental objects and see according to actuality that these mental objects are only just mental objects. They are not a being, an individual, nor a self. They are neither me not them.

The teachings of the Buddha are many; I'm not able to describe all of it. We've probably heard that at one time our Buddha was walking with a number of monks in the forest. Seeing fallen leaves scattered around, the Buddha picked up a handful of leaves and asked those bhikkhus, 'Monks, which is more, the leaves in my hand or all the leaves in the forest?' The bhikkhus answered, 'The leaves in the forest are more than those in your hand, so much so that they can not be compared.' The Buddha then taught that the knowledge and understanding that the Buddha had studied was comparable to the leaves in the forest, and the knowledge that He taught us was comparable to a handful of leaves.

The leaves in the forest stand for making merit, generosity, keeping precepts and developing tranquility-meditation, and the handful of leaves for insight-meditation. However, to do Vipassana we have to study through listening and reading at first, before we start practicing. Otherwise we'll waste a lot of time gathering all the leaves in the forest.

The practice of Vipassana that the Buddha teaches though developing the four *SATIPATTHANA* means learning to be aware. The Buddha said that there are two things that are of great assistance, namely:

1. *SATI*: to recollect; * before doing or thinking anything, know it with awareness, and

2. *SAMPAJANYA*: to realize; the moment we're thinking something, to realize it fully. *SATI-SAMPAJANYA*, when using ordinary language, just means to wake up, to awaken, to feel oneself all the time.

Developing Awareness Gives Rise to Wisdom

Talking from experience, it is not necessary to sit with the eyes closed in order to develop awareness. I've done the method of sitting with closed eyes, and wisdom didn't arise. But doing the new method, my method, wisdom did arise; and I got the feeling that is in accordance with the texts.

Some people may think that my method is new because they've never heard it before, but actually it is as old as the Buddhist teachings.

A. Arouse the body to always feel and be awake.

The development of awareness that I'm talking about and have been doing is done as follows. We can either sit down on the floor or on a chair, and it can even be done in the lying or standing-position. Catch with your awareness the movements of the hands; turn the hand up, turn the hand down, raise the

*To Recollect or not forget that there is the body (that there are movements), that there are feelings, that there is mind or that there are mental objects.

hand, lower the hand. Be aware of each posture. Do this often. This is the coarse way of developing awareness. Simply speaking, walking or lying down, or whatever you may be doing, know it. Everyone can do this method, no matter what religion one believed in. It can be practiced by all. People of all nationalities can do it because everyone has a body and mind. All religions teach the same thing: to abandon what is bad and to do what is good.

B. Arouse the mind to always feel and be awake.

Having developed awareness until one is skilled at it, catch the feelings in the mind with awareness, following whatever comes up, no matter what one is thinking. Know and see it. Keep watching your own thoughts continuously. Regardless of what you're doing, look at your own mind all the time, no matter what it is that you are doing – reading a book, writing, digging, cutting grass or bathing. Keep watch over your own mind all the time. What kinds of feelings are coming up? Satisfaction, dissatisfaction, worry, doubts, etc.; these things are all thoughts, objects. Watch over these thoughts and objects. Then we will see the various kinds of thoughts, such as gladness, sadness, desire to get, desire to not get, anger, hate, and so forth. They don't exist all the time. They arise and pass away, they change all the time. We are not glad or sad for twenty-four hours.

C. To know and see according to reality.

Change, arising-passing away, is what the Buddha showed to be impermanence, instability and non-selfhood. So don't follow moods. The Buddha proclaimed that He was enlightened by working with the mind. We have to look at our minds. Watching the mind is turning on the light by using the switch. When we do this often, awareness will become nimble

and quick; awareness will intercept greed, hatred and delusion and prevent it from arising. Awareness and concentration are together. As for wisdom, it means knowing and seeing clearly. In Pali, it says *NATTHI PANYA SAMA ABHA*, meaning there is nothing as bright as wisdom. And *SATI TESAM NIVARANAM*, meaning awareness is that which prevents the stream of defilements. There isn't anything that is fast enough to hold back this stream, other than Sati. It is this Awareness and wisdom that come and contact, know, see and stop it, not letting us become deluded. This is because *Sati-Samadhi-Panya* is opposite to *Dosa-Moha-Lobha*. If we don't see, know and understand, there is full greed, hatred and delusion. It is comparable to nighttime, when it's dark. As soon as we light a candle there is light and the darkness disappears, because darkness is afraid of light; as soon as the candle goes out, the darkness immediately comes back.

D. Peace as result

That I'm giving some reflections and explaining this shortcut-method of practice is in order for you all to take it and practice with it, so that you get quick results and don't have to waste time. This method can be used in daily life; there is no need to stop working in order to practice.

Some people have practiced a bit already, and some people have only just heard it. Some people who have never heard it might feel displeased. If that's how you feel, then discard that feeling first, the knowledge that you have learned before. Put it down for now and test out what I'm saying; try it out and you will know what the results that arise are like. I dare to guarantee that this method is at least eighty percent right according to what the Buddha teaches. Talking according to just my own personal feeling, it is one-hundred percent right, because having practiced it, I know that it alleviates greed,

hatred and delusion. When those things diminish, peace arises instead.

E. Full awareness as result.

I'd like to give another example: Take a glass. We can see that there is air in the glass. When we pour water into it, the air goes out and the water is in it instead. Then, when we pour the water out, the air goes back in and replaces the water. This compares with our turning up the hand. We know, we have awareness, Sati comes to replace not-knowing, delusion. Not-knowing goes out of our minds. Do it often. Catch the feeling often, in all postures. Sati will increase; and delusion, not-knowing will decrease just as the water replaces air in the glass.

Maybe some of you have heard about, or have been taught, to make merit, for example by building a ceremonial hall or temple; and you get merit for this or that many eons. And you've probably heard that one-hundred years on earth equals on year in heaven. The angels throw one sesame seed in a pit that is one-hundred leagues deep. When it is full, that's one eon!

Other than that, you've probably heard that to once put food into a monks bowl, you get rewarded for six eons, sending a container with food to offer to monks, one gets rewarded for five eons, to send food for the midday meal, five eons. These things are puzzles, but some people don't understand. If you want to understand, you have to practice, to develop awareness, by turning the hand up and down, feeling it. Before, we would do things without Sati, not feeling anything at all.

It’s comparable to an abyss or pit that is empty, nothing in it, just like in that puzzle. But when training in awareness, catching the movement in all postures – for example, blinking the eyes, sitting and lying down – we are aware, feeling it,

knowing it. When doing this, Sati increases, just like the sesame seeds that fall in the pit or abyss that is one-hundred leagues wide and one-hundred leagues deep. The aim of this comparison is that we train a lot in awareness and that we do it a lot in order to get results, to make Sati full, so that we are not negligent or deluded.

When we have developed the four foundations of awareness, as described earlier, we will have the ability to really contemplate, ponder and understand the various problems in our minds.

Developing Awareness in The Right Way Will Yield Results Within three Years

It says in the scriptures that whoever develops the four *SATIPATTHANA* in the right way, and as continuous as links in a chain, will receive one of the following two results: at most, within seven years, medium within months or as fast as one-to-fifteen days to become, one, an Arahant or, two, an Anagami (i.e. one who is nearly fully enlightened) in this very life.

As for the way of developing the awareness that I'm talking about: if you really do it, knowledge and understanding will arise, and suffering will diminish, within at most three years, medium within one year, or as fast as one-to-ninety days.

We will know, see and understand, and our life from then onwards will have happiness and no suffering. To practice like this, we don't have to spend money; we can do it an hour a day, or 5 minutes. Even hearing about it often makes the defilements gradually diminish.

Greed, hatred and delusion are evil; they are suffering. To get angry once is evil and is suffering one time. Evil and

darkness are the same. Darkness means not seeing, not knowing, not understanding. Merit and knowledge are the same. When we understand, we are at ease, we don't have suffering and we don't doubt. If the mind is dark, there is suffering and doubt. For example, doubt that we're going to be reborn like this and like that after death. But some people, including myself, who have made merit, been generous, kept precepts and practiced tranquility-meditation, still doubt about merit and demerit, about falling into hell or going up to heaven after death. They don't understand at that time. The Buddha teaches that heaven is in the heart, hell is in the mind; and Nibbana also is in the mind. Our grandparents use to tell us this, be we didn't reflect on it, so we didn't understand it.

(We Have To Practice And Know For Ourselves)

Studying from scriptures is good, but it can not solve suffering. Teachers teach that we should let go of greed, hatred and delusion; but they themselves can't let go of it. Teaching others is easy, but teaching oneself is hard.

But this method of mine is not difficult. You don't have to study or learn anything. Being able to read and write or not is of no importance. Everyone can practice; men as well as women ordained or not ordained. We can all practice. There is only one Dhamma, not many kinds.

To say that the Dhamma of a person who keeps five precepts is one thing, that the Dhamma of a person who keeps eight precepts is another thing, the Dhamma of an ordained person is another thing, the Dhamma of a lay-person is another thing, the Dhamma of a person who practices insight-meditation yet another thing. That is a different matter. That is not what I'm talking about. I say that there is only one Dhamma. Dhamma is to finish *Lobha, Dosa & Moha*. Doing this is what virtue and Dhamma are. It says in the scriptures

that virtue is the means to eliminate course defilements, concentration is the means to eliminate medium defilements, and wisdom is the means to eliminate subtle defilements. But can we really eliminate them? No. Why not? Because we don't do it properly.

The word defilement stands for greed, hatred and delusion, but most of us understand it only as materialistic, that having money, a big house and a smart car is defilement. But in reality, those things are not defilements. They are just things that come from being diligent and knowing how to work, and from knowing how to save and accumulate things. But the defilements that I'm talking about are greed, hatred, delusion and sorrow. These defilements are not afraid of anyone, not of rich people, not of influential people, not even of monks ordained for a long time, with a title, are they afraid. They enter into everyone's mind.

On speaking in another way, we could say that the defilements slap everyone's face. A wealthy person, on being told off a bit, is displeased. This shows that the defilements slap him or her in the face. Or when someone praises him or her, satisfaction arises. This is the defilements slapping his or her face. These defilements are not afraid of anyone at all. They are only afraid of those who are disciples of the Buddha, they are afraid of those who develop the four foundations of awareness in the right way; they are ashamed, they don't dare to come close, because that person has the eye to see the Dhamma, the wisdom to see clearly.

Of the lay-people who have come here today, some people are still young, only twenty-to-thirty years old. If you develop awareness in the right way, within two or three years you will go beyond suffering; and during the remaining part of your life, you will just have happiness. Even older people fifty or sixty years old, are the same. Until you die your life will

only have happiness. And when you die, you die without suffering. If you still have another nine or ten years to live, it will be nine or ten years without suffering, with only happiness and coolness of mind.

This is the heartwood, the essence of Buddhism! The word Buddha means the one who knows, the awakened one, one who is joyful with Dhamma.

I have shared some of my reflections and understanding. It is a shortcut to practicing Vipassana. It is instantaneous. Having listened, please practice with every breath, no matter where you are, whatever work you are engaged in. You can practice while washing clothes, doing the dishes, sweeping up, or working in the field. Vipassana is wisdom, it is life, it is virtue, it is the Dhamma, it is everything. It is the real life, it is the real Dhamma. May you understand it like this.

Summary of The Shortcut

I'll give you a few small reflections:

1. To be diligent in developing awareness in all postures: Turn the hand up, turn the hand down, raise the hand, lower the hand, walk back and forth, lean to the right and the left, blink the eyes, open the mouth, swallow saliva, breath in and out, fully feeling yourself doing it. This is called having Sati. It is equal to throwing sesame seeds into the abyss. When awareness is complete, wisdom arises to really know and see the following matters: Rupa-Nama; Rupa doing – Nama doing; Rupa disease – Nama disease; knowing instability, impermanence and non-selfhood; knowing convention; knowing religion; knowing Buddhism; knowing evil; knowing merit. Really knowing! These are objects to know with real awareness and wisdom.

2. Next, to work with the mind: Look at the mind with awareness. Whatever the mind thinks, immediately know it and conquer it. When we immediately know and conquer thought, this is called working with the mind.

3. Do it until you are nimble and swift, until greed, hatred and delusion stop arising. It is the calming and extinguishing of suffering in the mind.

This type of suffering we can't chase away as we would chase off a pig, a dog, a duck or a chicken. We must depend on the development of awareness and see our minds in order to deal with these types of defilements. If we don't see our minds, we will be empty, similar to a pit or abyss that is never full. When we have awareness, it means it is full, it is no longer a pit or an abyss; and *Lobha, Dosa & Moha* don't have a place to enter, because awareness is full.

Whatever work we do, we do it with Sati/Panya. there is no delusion, only rightness. These types of defilements are ugly and worthy of getting fed up with. Whoever is a disciple of the Buddha with an eye to see the Dhamma will not have them lying around in his or her mind. they are afraid. Suppose we have defilements at a level of one-hundred percent. They slap our face one-hundred percent. When we see and understand them, they will gradually diminish. Then, when we try to become familiar with looking at our minds, the defilements will diminish increasingly, step by step. When it reaches one-hundred percent we're rid of suffering. What is left is one-hundred percent happiness.

Therefore, may you all try to practice and reach the real peace and happiness.

The Path of Peace

May you all listen well, this time, so that Sati/Panya springs up.

(Knowing Suffering)

Something we have in common is that we don't want suffering; we hate it. Then how does suffering arise? Suffering arises because we don't know. Suffering doesn't exist within us, and it doesn't arise all the time. What really exists for sure is normality. By nature the mind of each person is in a state of normality.

As we're working, if we do it with delusion, it is called suffering. Most people have suffering while working because they don't see suffering. People who go and see movies and shows do so because suffering leads them; this is due to our not watching minds. The moment we want to go and watch a movie, a thought flashes up that we want to watch a movie. We're not thinking it all day long. When the thought comes up, we don't see the thought. We only just know the thought, and we act, following the thought. This is called suffering. People who smoke are the same. Sometimes they don't even think to smoke but simply follow their moods. They take a cigarette to smoke because they think it is happiness; but actually it is suffering that compels them to do it.

(Suffering Stinks)

As to this word suffering, the Buddha sometimes calls it suffering, sometimes defilement, sometimes stench. When talking about suffering or defilements one notes that it has an ugly smell to it, according to Buddhism. Suffering is something dirty and it stinks; nobody wants it. As soon as the body dies, it starts to rot and stink. But we can still wash and

clean it. Excrement is something that stinks, and we detest it. Nobody wants to touch or grab hold of it.

But even with such stinking things, the Buddha said, they don't stink all that much; they can still be touched and washed. But the stinking things to which the Buddha is referring are really stinky! They are greed, hatred and delusion, concealed in our minds, ready to bubble up. The Buddha condemns this emphatically. If anyone's mind still has greed, hatred and delusion, the Buddha says that it stinks more than excrement.

As soon as the mind thinks something in a flash, a person who doesn't know, doesn't see and doesn't understand becomes deluded immediately. This arising is called by the Buddha a stain. The word "stain" means delusion. Even though we've never known, seen or watched our minds, we still say that we see. But in reality it is not seeing; it is only just knowing thought, and then we act according to the thought. When we say ‘to see,’ it should mean that we see defilements. That is, we see that either there is greed, hatred or delusion mixed up in thought, or there is not. To see like this, we have to practice Dhamma first.

Practicing Dhamma

(Vipassana)

In practicing Dhamma, even though one may practice various methods for a long time, if one doesn't perceive that point where the mind is manifesting, one still doesn't understand. One still doesn't understand the main principle of practice according to the teachings of the Buddha. The Buddha said that He was Enlightened because He worked with the mind, practiced with the mind. But most of us just make merit and give offerings in order to chase off suffering. We haven't

yet practiced by following the Buddha's style.

The Buddha once taught that the results of making merit a hundred or a thousand times are less than is gained by keeping the precepts even once, the results of keeping precepts a hundred or a thousand times are less than making the mind peaceful through practicing tranquility-meditation once, and the results of making the mind peaceful through practicing tranquility-meditation a hundred or a thousand times are less than practicing insight-meditation once. What does insight mean?

Insight means to clearly and truly see in a way that is different from one's original way of seeing. Different because the original way of seeing is a state that doesn't know, see and understand clearly. Briefly stated, the mind is muddled up. Doing Vipassana means to be aware. Being aware is very fruitful. The Buddha practiced Dhamma through being aware, and so became Enlightened.

(Peace)

Most of us understand that in order to be an Arahant, we have to do tranquility-meditation and make the mind peaceful. In reality, there are two kinds of peace, namely, peace that is like being inside a cave and peace that is like being outside a cave.

Peace inside a cave means it is just as though we're in a cave or we're in a dark, dark room. When we light a fire, the darkness disappears and light come to take its place; but as soon as the fire goes out, the darkness come back again. Even when we've made a fire and there's light, we're still in the cave and we still can't see the shape of the cave. We only just see certain things inside the cave. Peace inside a cave is therefore called peace under the influence of *Moha*, a ‘not-knowing’ kind of peace, or even a ‘not-wanting-to-know’ kind of peace.

That some people go and sit to make their minds peaceful, understanding that they're developing insight – this is so, but it's a deluded kind of truth.

As for peace outside a cave, it's just like being outside a cave, but it's not dark. There's no need to make a fire, and we're able to know and see what the shape of the cave is like. This may be likened to peace that is without delusion, i.e., peace due to the absence of defilements. There is no *Lobha, Dosa, or Moha*. In order to achieve this kind of peace, we have to realize and truly see first. Seeing truly and clearly is called insight. Insight is to realize and truly see according to reality. Peace outside the cave is therefore called a 'knowing' kind of peace. One is peaceful because one knows.

I want to shake up and warn all of you that developing insight has many obstacles. If we don't know, we'll go wrong; but when we see, know and understand, we can solve the problems.

(The First Obstacle)

The first obstacle in developing Vipassana can appear when we make movements with the body and Sati is aware of it. Wisdom arises in the mind that knows reality as it really is. That is, it knows Rupa-Nama; it knows instability, impermanence and non-selfhood; it knows convention; it knows religion, knows Buddhism, knows evil and knows merit. This is wisdom knowing through Vipassana. But it's only just the outer bark of Vipassana, still not able to deal with suffering. It is just knowing in knowing; it is knowing through thought, knowing the scriptures. It is defilement due to Vipassana. The obstacle is that when this kind of knowledge arises, we get buried in it, a kind of knowledge that is still similar to being inside a cave.

Therefore, next we must try and find a method to get out

of the cave, to pull ourselves out of that knowledge, gradually, by watching our thoughts. As soon as a thought flashes up, know, see, and understand that it has come up. This is practicing Dhamma a little bit deeper.

Ordinarily, a tree has an outer bark. When one removes the outer bark, he reaches the layer with the nourishing sap inside. Removing that layer, one reaches the white wood. Removing that, one comes to the heartwood. Buddhism is the same. Knowing Rupa-Nama, evil and merit is also knowledge; but it is outer knowledge, enough to deal with suffering on one level, such as not being foolish by believing in auspicious things and lucky omens, or in ghosts and angels. But when one is in such a state, greed, hatred and delusion are still there, because one doesn't know the origin or source of it.

To solve this problem, to know the origin of the arising of greed, hatred and delusion, we must watch our minds, like a cat that waits for a chance to grab a mouse. As soon as a though comes up in the mind, look at it and fix on it so that it is known in time. A though comes. Whack, cut it off straight away! Another one, whack, cut it off right there! Do this often. Thoughts will thereby decrease and awareness will increase. Just as with the positive and the negative. When there is more of the positive, the negative lessens. We start off never having seen thought, thinking a hundred things and never seeing a single thought.

But when we are watching like this, we catch it once and cut it off. The remaining thoughts are less than a hundred now and will steadily decrease step-by-step, as long as we keep at it.

We keep gazing like this, a thought comes, we cut it off, another one arises, we drop it. When we think a hundred thoughts and we know ninety-five of them, it shows that we have a lot of awareness. Just five thoughts left that we can't keep up with. Right here is where we have to put forth effort:

watch thought but don't be caught up in the thought. When we know and see all the hundred thoughts, keep up with every thought every time, it is equal to knowing and seeing exactly where greed, hatred and delusion are born. We have to throw them off so that defilements are unable to arise. This is called to keep abreast by knowing, to know in time. Knowing how to prevent, knowing how to solve. This is where we're able to deal with *Lobha, Dosa &Moha*.

Defilements can arise because we get deluded right here. We don't know that their origin is right here. This refers even to someone who goes to the monastery to listen to talks, who makes offerings, who keeps precepts and develops both tranquility and insight-meditation. If that person has still never seen his or her own thoughts, then that person is still far from the Truth taught by the Buddha. Contrariwise, even if a person has never gone to a monastery to listen to the Dhamma, has never made offerings or kept precepts, but is always aware of what his or her mind is thinking, that person equals with knowing. He keeps abreast of thoughts, knows how to prevent, knows how to solve and knows how to conquer every time. That person is close to the Truth, the Dhamma taught by the Buddha.

Have you ever heard of the Buddha having taught that the Dhamma exists already? But there is nobody with discernment who can dig it up and find it; so it stays undiscovered. Because it is undiscovered, people make merit, give offerings, keep precepts and do Samatha-meditation in order to develop good habits. So we believe that it is meritorious and wholesome to accumulate those things for the next life or for the future. This is wrong understanding. The Buddha didn't teach like this. The Buddha taught us to see our own minds.

We have heard the story of the monk Vakkali, who was

attached to the Buddha's body and never looked at his own mind. When he was corrected by the Buddha, he became so upset that he was going to jump from a cliff and die. The Buddha stopped him and taught him that it is difficult to get born as a human being. And it's very rare for a human being to have an opportunity to listen to the Dhamma from a Nobel person. The Buddha said further that His body was just material. After his death it would rot and stink. That is not the Buddha. The real Buddha can be found within the monk Vakkali. It is the Dhamma that is present in all people, that is, cleanliness, brightness and peace, which is the Buddha.

The Buddha proclaimed, 'whoever sees the Dhamma, sees Me. Whoever doesn't see the Dhamma, doesn't see Me, even when taking hold of My robe or My finger.' The monk Vakkali woke up and started to work with the mind; and he saw his own thinking.

(Seeing The Dhamma)

I would like to remind you once more that the word Dhamma refers to our seeing our own minds at the moment that we are acting, talking or thinking. This is what is called seeing the Dhamma. I dare to insist that the very life of the Dhamma exists in all people without exception, no matter whether you are a man or a woman, a monk of a novice; no matter what nationality you may have, whatever language you may speak of whatever clothes you may wear. It's all the same. The Dhamma is the actions of body, speech and mind. Actions of the body other people can see; actions of speech others can hear; but actions of the mind others are not able to see. You can only see them yourself.

For this reason, the monk Vakkali felt at ease viewing it like this. Whether he saw the body of the Buddha or not, he would feel at ease because he saw the real Buddha; that is,

really seeing according to reality, an ability that exists in everyone.

The Buddha once described seeing in this way: with flowers, black, red, white or whatever colour, they are all ready to bloom when touched by sunshine. That I'm giving you these reflections right now is the same. Anyone can apply them in daily life, whether man or woman, whatever clothes he or she may be wearing, whatever religion is upheld. It can be used by everyone in the same way, because we all have a body and mind.

When one sees one's own mind at the moment that it thinks, this indicates that one sees one's own mind at the origin or source of thought. The Buddha points to thought, which must be watched with awareness, as one must not get caught up in the thoughts. Whoever sees this, he or she is called by the Buddha a flower that is ready to bloom when the sun shines. The word sunshine refers to the teachings of the Buddha that direct us to practice with the mind.

Whatever work you do, control your thoughts with awareness. Some people don't do it yet, because they're not interested. But when we are interested, when we are suffering, we must be ready to do it.

There are 84,000 teachings in Buddhism. They are not for reciting and for performing ceremonies. That was not the Buddha's intention. The Buddha's teachings have nothing at all to do with superstition. They are to be practiced only in order to solve the suffering of the mind.

Some people might agree that without ceremonies and rituals Buddhism can't extinguish suffering. This fails to understand the meaning in the right way. We've heard that in the time of the Buddha, when He would expound the Dhamma to people, there were many people who would open the eye to see the Dhamma and enter the stream of Nibbana from the first

stage of enlightenment upwards by the time the discourse was finished. They didn't have to perform rites and rituals other than working with the mind, as the Buddha indicated.

Wherever we explain the Dhamma, if we don't make this point, our words are a stain. Why are they a stain? They are a stain because we don't indicate the way that people who are interested in the Dhamma must practice in order to free oneself from suffering and defilements. And they are a stain because we thereby abandon these effective teachings. Therefore, may you all try to understand this point without fail. If we don't practice according to this important teaching, then we fail to understand the teaching of the Buddha.

(The Second Obstacle)

The second obstacle in developing insight is that when we begin to understand and see this point, we are able to destroy greed, hatred and delusion to some extent; but at the same time, joy is lying concealed within it. The Buddha says this is still not right. Joy is darkness, but it is white darkness. Joy is due to our satisfaction and pride that we can do it. White darkness is frightening because it is hard to see. Black darkness is easy to see because it is dark. Being caught up in joy is to see wrong as right; because as soon as we can destroy some defilements, we don't watch at the point where the defilements are destroyed, but we get sucked into the point where joy arises. Therefore joy is an obstacle in attaining higher stages to Nibbana.

Being caught up in joy is equal to being caught up in thinking. A thought comes up and we get caught up in the thought; so we don't see the thought. When we get caught up in joy, we don't see joy; and we're just content with joy.

Because of this, the Buddha teaches us to pull ourselves out of the thought that we're thinking, to stand outside of it.

Then we will see our thoughts. People who still don't know and see their thoughts say just the same, that they know thought. But in reality they don't understand that thoughts come up continuously, and they get caught up in them. Those who have joy or are attached to the peace of tranquility-meditation are the same. They are caught up in peacefulness, don't know that peace is delusion, and thus get caught up in peace. It is comparable to someone who doesn't know how to turn on the light. He or she turns the light bulb. No light appears.

The person who pulls him or herself out of thought and knows and sees thoughts may be compared to someone who knows how to turn on the light; that person turns on the switch and light does appear. So we have to know the origin of thought and come to an understanding with these little thoughts of ours. Then we will have as much ability as an electric light in brightening the interior of the mind, just as one correctly turns on the light with the switch.

When we're looking at our minds, there is no greed, hatred and delusion. But the moment that we're not looking and lose awareness, greed, hatred and delusion can come back, and we can get caught up in them. It's just like a car driving along the road. At the place where the car passes there is a wind blowing behind it; leaves and dust flap and flutter at the back of the car.

Thoughts of greed, hatred and delusion flash up for a moment, and we follow them. How can we still say that we know thought? In reality we don't see thought, but we get caught up in it.

The Buddha teaches that whoever doesn't see one's own thoughts is a heedless person. Heedlessness is poison to one's life; it's like being dead. This is what I said: It stinks! The Buddha said that there is nothing that stinks as much as the

mind that has greed, hatred and delusion, the mind that is stained, the dirty mind.

Our real mind isn't dirty or stained at all. It's like a light bulb. The filament in the bulb is not dirty, but dust can settle on the outside of the bulb; the inside is still as bright as before. Or we could compare it with the sun. When clouds obscure the light from coming to the earth, it gets dark; but the sun is still as bright as before.

(Vijja – Avijja)

People who don't see thought and get caught up in thought are called people in the cycle of dependent origination; they are people who don't know.

We've probably heard this: Avijja is the condition for formation to arise; formations are the condition for the birth of consciousness; consciousness conditions mentality/materiality; mentality/materiality conditions the six senses; the six senses condition contact; contact conditions feeling; feeling conditions craving; craving conditions clinging; clinging conditions being; being conditions birth; and birth conditions old age, death and suffering. It's a cycle. Avijja translates as not knowing; we say that we know, but we don't see our minds. Instead we get caught up in thought. As for the word Vija, it means knowing, seeing one's own thoughts. A thought comes up, we see it, and it stops. It's like a cat and a mouse. If we don't have a cat at home, the mice are not afraid; but when we have a cat, it will catch the mice as soon as they show their faces. The mice die of shock when they get caught. They can die even though the cat doesn't bite. They have such shock; never been caught by a cat before. This is similar to our fixing on thoughts in our minds: when a thought comes, we know it in time; and it immediately stops, comes to a halt, can't concoct any further. This is called Vijja, knowing, to know in time, knowing how to

prevent, knowing how to solve and knowing how to conquer – just like a cat and a mouse.

If we don't reflect on the teachings of the Buddha, we don't understand them, and we argue and debate about the teachings, competing with each other. This is not right!

Someone who has studied the teaching and employs that knowledge as a tool for killing defilement or dealing with suffering is doing it right, according to the Buddha's intention. These days, we study the Buddhist scriptures until we have degrees, up to the ninth level. Some may look at their own thoughts, but some never watch their minds at all. Whoever has studied but never seen his or her own thoughts, says the Buddha, are like a termite that makes holes and eats books. With academic studies it's the same: studying until one has university degrees, but still never watching one's mind. Such persons know about other people but don't know and see themselves. These people are not considered wise in Buddhism because their knowledge is only of use in an academic way, but is not useful spiritually. When we have a university degree we should deal with our minds also, that is, eliminate defilements, the coarse ones as well as the medium and subtle ones.

(Going Against The Stream Of Thought)

We've all probably heard that the Buddha at one time practiced by tormenting Himself, but saw that that method was wrong and stopped it. After that, He partook of food offered by a lady named Sujata. The Buddha asked her, 'Do you offer just the food or is the tray included as well?' She answered that all was offered. Having finished the meal, the Buddha took the tray to the bank of the river and made the following resolution: If He would be Enlightened, may the tray placed on the water flow against the current.

This is not a true story; it's an illustration and has meaning on the level of the mind. The tray is the mind, the water represents the defilements; and the Buddha working with the mind is the action of going against the stream. The Buddha didn't let His mind follow the defilements. The current of the water is the current of thought. Following defilements is easy, everyone is doing it already; and so we have suffering!

The Buddha practiced going against the stream of defilements for the extinguishing of suffering by watching the mind, seeing His own mind thinking. As soon as a thought would come up and there was desire to follow what the eye saw, the ear heard, the nose smelled, the tongue tasted or the body felt, the Buddha saw those thoughts as defilements. He practiced going against the current of thought, not following the thoughts, which want things. Practicing like this, knowledge arose in Him and He was Enlightened.

The thing that the Buddha points out to us to practice is to know thought with awareness, looking at our own minds. Whatever thought comes up, we should know and understand it, so that the thought does not proliferate further. When thought flashes up, we watch it with awareness; and the thought stops by itself. In practicing Dhamma, the thing to be careful about is the knowledge that knows things outside of ourselves. This kind of knowledge is defilement due to Vipassana.

When we have such knowledge, it gives rise to gladness and joy. Joy is called white darkness. It is wrong knowing. Don't get attached to joy! Continuing the practice to the end, until we clearly see our thoughts, their origin and their source, we come at last to the state of arising/passing. It is a break-off, a final exhaustion. I've compared it many times with a rope, tightly tied on both sides and being cut in the middle with a knife. The rope breaks; one can not pull it together again, that

is, one can't use it anymore.

The twelve senses are similar: on seeing a form with the eye, on hearing a sound with the ear, etc., let there only just be seeing and hearing and so on. Don't concoct it into beautiful or ugly, good or bad, pleasing or displeasing sound, the sound of a woman, the sound of a man, etc. Just simply see or hear neutrally. But these are still mere words.

In practice, we have to look and see and break them apart. When they are broken, there is not more concocting; the senses are not able to reach each other anymore.

(Cleanliness, Brightness And Peace)

Our Minds are already Clean, Bright and Peaceful! Clean means not dirty, because there are no defilements. Bright means there is wisdom, seeing our minds, or life. Peaceful means having stopped; there is no longer anything further to add.

Summary

At this point, I'll summarize the principles of practice:

1. The first stage is to catch the movements of the body in all the postures. When we can catch them, we will know the convention that we can see with our eyes and touch with our hands. This is objective, external.

2. Having practiced the first stage, a little bit of knowledge arises, it is called defilements due to Vipassana. It is important to avoid this, not being too glad with the knowing, and continuing to watch the mind, When we see, know and understand our minds penetratingly, greed, hatred and delusion will be destroyed to some extent.

3. When greed, hatred and delusion have gone down a bit, we'll feel joyfulness. When joy arises, fix on it, but don't

be caught up in joy. We have to pull ourselves out of it. Keep watching the mind. At this stage, wisdom-knowledge will appear that destroys or diminishes clinging and grasping.

4. When attachment has decreased, one will see, know and understand normality. The body is normal, speech is normal and the mind is normal. This normality is called virtue-concentration-wisdom.

5. When seeing the state of arising/passing, if one doesn't understand it, one will hold an abnormal view, but if one is fully aware, practice reaches its end.

Therefore, I encourage you to try to practice until you meet with you own thoughts and are able to pull yourself out of them.

Stages of Practice

Determine to listen well, all lay-people and monastic friends. When you determine to pay attention, you'll be able to remember. It is called knowing through memory and comprehension. From that, we study or practice to realize and truly know, or we have knowledge coming from our own vision and experience.

Most people don't yet know and understand from studying and practicing; they only know how to make merit, to be generous, to keep precepts and to do tranquility-meditation. But when it comes to more profound matters, that is to say, how to develop insight-meditation, there are really very few people who know and understand it. With Vipassana it is usually a specific case, a specific individual, who knows and teaches it. Because of this, people are lazy and don't want to practice. As far as practice goes, they only know tranquility-meditation, which they think is the same as doing Vipassana. This is because they still don't realize and really know. Their knowledge comes only through memory and comprehension. So, we make ourselves peaceful; but we don't understand clearly that there are two kinds of peace, namely peace under the influence of delusion and peace due to awareness and wisdom.

The Path That Is Not A Path

When we create the cause by meditating, the mind becomes peaceful as a result. For example, we recite the word Bud-dho. I used to do this: inhaling, Bud, exhaling, dho. While doing walking-meditation one recites Bud-dho with every step, walking in accordance with the breathing. These things create peace because it is done slowly.

After that, I met a teacher from the North named Sow, who told me that one can not climb a tree from the top, that one has to start at the roots. He taught me to count 1-2-3 until ten and back again 10-9-8 until one. He said this is beginning at the beginning. This is another way of following the breath; inhaling say one. Exhaling say two, etc., the only difference being the words you use.

Seeing the Dhamma

Seeing The Dhamma

In practicing Dhamma our views or intentions may not be the same, therefore the practice and the results of practice are not the same. Instead of talking about the differences in practice, I'll talk about seeing the Dhamma

To practice in order to see to Dhamma, some people have to sit or lie down with eyes closed and reflect. Then, they see colours, lights, ghosts, angels, heaven and hell or hungry ghosts and animals. This kind of seeing is fantasy or illusion; one thinks and then sees it. This is not right, according to the teachings of the Buddha, because when we open the eyes, we no longer see it. This is called defilement because we don't see our thoughts. The mind thinks but we don't see it, letting defilements deceive us or, one could say, letting them slap our face. This is not seeing the Dhamma.

Seeing the Dhamma with awareness and wisdom, from really having developed insight, is the opposite; we must see ourselves, see materiality and mentality, comprehend Rupa and Nama. This is really seeing ourselves. We really see with open eyes; we see as we're acting, speaking, thinking and doing various jobs. This is called seeing the Dhamma. The Dhamma is something that we have to see at the moment that we're doing good and doing evil, or neither good nor evil.* To see the Dhamma with awareness and wisdom is to see like this. On seeing, one must be sure; the object of the seeing can't change into something else. This is really seeing the Dhamma. That's why I say that they are opposites; one is seeing an illusion, another is seeing with awareness and wisdom.

*The word 'Dhamma' (Dharma in Sanskrit) is changed into 'Tum' in Thai, and the word 'Tam' means 'To Do.' A play on words!

In the Past I used to understand that it was as I just described; but when I really understood Dhamma, according to the teachings of the Buddha, I saw that that was wrong. We have to see ourselves in order to see the Dhamma. To see other things is defilement. Some teachers say that that is seeing the Dhamma, that one has this and that knowledge. These are people who still do not understand. They create things with thought; it's not anything real. If it is real, one must really see oneself. Sitting we see, lying down we see, walking we see, wherever we come and go we see ourselves. This is called really seeing, seeing the Dhamma.

To see the external Rupa-Nama is called seeing the bark of the Dhamma. To see with awareness ourselves acting, speaking and thinking is to see on a deeper level. And to see, know and understand thoughts arising is to see even more deeply.

When seeing ourselves acting, talking and thinking, something bad arises, we must conquer it. We don't act on it, we don't follow that low impulse. The Buddha said that low thoughts are defilements; they are suffering; they are forms of greed, hatred or delusion. And when they are greed, hatred or delusion, they will lead to suffering. Before we get angry or make a mistake, we don't see ourselves. We don't see our mind that is thinking. But when we do see ourselves as we're getting angry, we know that we're getting angry, and don't have to get angry. When we see our minds thinking like this, it stops. The Buddha calls this seeing, knowing and understanding. Really seeing the Dhamma.

To see the Dhamma, we must see the kind of Dhamma that the Buddha saw. We've heard that the Buddha went to study and practice Dhamma. Therefore we know that the Dhamma existed already before the Buddha. To 'exist already' means that when we are born we already have Rupa and Nama,

or a body and mind. This mind of ours is there already. But we never look at it; we look somewhere else. We watch other people doing good and bad. We criticize others. That's how it is. That's why I say that people don't see themselves. Some people, having been born, up to age nine or ten, or even one-hundred, until death, never watch materiality and mentality, never look at their own minds even once. Having been born a human being thus doesn't have any value. We can call it 'taking a loss in being born human.' Some people watch themselves, once or twice perhaps before they die.

So in coming together here, or coming to train ourselves, we must try to look at our mind. If we see our mind as it is thinking, even a little, on some occasions, we will develop the strength and ability to produce light inside our mind. Before this, our mind was dark and blind; but when we come to understand, and to see little by little, we're able to chase away the darkness or delusion.

Darkness, here, does not mean the same as traveling without light. It's not like that. This darkness refers to our not seeing our own mind. In reality our mind, everyone's mind, is already clean, bright and peaceful. Clean means not soiled; bright means seeing clearly. Seeing what? Seeing our life and our mind! Seeing it clearly. Peaceful means enough, stopping, no need to add anything by studying because there is just this much. For people to avoid suffering, we must watch right here.

Therefore, the Buddha teaches that our not seeing our mind can be compared to clouds or a murky sky concealing the sunlight. The light of the sun cannot reach the surface of the earth. At any moment that we don't see our life, don't see our mind, at that moment we are those whom the Buddha described as 'someone without awareness.' One might even say 'someone with defilements' because, at that moment defilements overwhelm us in our mind. And we follow the

whims of those defilements, even though the mind itself remains clean, bright and peaceful! That's why the Buddha teaches us to be aware, to comprehend and see clearly within ourselves.

To see the Dhamma, we have to see ourselves. That is how the Buddha sees the Dhamma. When seeing like this, one can chase away greed, hatred and delusion.

In reality, greed, hatred and delusion don't exist in us; they just flash up for a moment only. It is similar to ice. Ice is made into lumps, but the lumps don't endure; when they are exposed to the weather, they dissolve and return to their original state of being water. Greed, hatred and delusion are similar; they don't endure, but only appear in a flash.

When we don't see the course of events, we don't see their arising; and we can say, 'they slap our face.' Or, like a car driving down the road, dust flutters at the back of the car, which passes in a moment; and the dust settles.

Thought that is greed, hatred and delusion is the same. They are only there for a short period, but we comply with them. So the Buddha taught us to see and understand our mind, to have enough awareness to keep up with and know how to prevent thought, to know how to deal with and be able to really conquer the mind. This is seeing the Dhamma. You have to see it in this way. Don't see it any other way.

Seeing the Dhamma can be compared to many things, for example wind blowing against a tree. We don't know where the wind is, but the leaves flutter. Defilements are the same. They don't stay long; they just come up in a flash. But we act, speak and think following them, these low things.

The Buddha, therefore, said that they are Kilesa. Defilements are suffering. We must try to make ourselves aware and to have the wisdom to watch and see our mind, to view all with knowing, to know in time, to know how to

prevent and solve, and to be able to beat the defilements. When we see our thoughts like this, we see immediately what suffering is, what defilements are; and when we see that, then the thoughts, which are defilements or suffering, are not concocted any further. Really, the Buddha perceives it this way, and my understanding is that it really must be like this way.

Because we don't see, we just follow what others do and don't give attention to this matter. We don't turn around to look at ourselves. Instead, we watch others acting, talking and thinking, or we pay attention to cars, motorcycles, the environment, children, and so forth. We look over there, but we never turn to look at ourselves, not even once. When we don't look at ourselves, we forget ourselves, we get deluded just looking at others. The Buddha calls people like that 'someone with defilements or cankers.' The word canker can be used to refer to defilement.

We have come together to train in insight. The word Vipassana is just a Pali word. It is Dhamma-Language. In ordinary speech, it means clearly seeing. When we see clearly, we see differently from before and make a shift in consciousness. What is it that insight sees clearly? It clearly sees ourselves acting, speaking and thinking. That's what it sees. And it sees differently from before. Formerly we didn't understand that things are like this. A shift in consciousness. We stop things that are bad because we are no longer deluded.

In the past we used to revere ghosts and angels, gamble, drink alcohol, take various kinds of drugs, go out at night to watch shows and so forth. We used to do these things, but when we see that all of this amounts only to desires and defilements, we stop. But *our mind itself abides in normality. It desires nothing. It is clean, bright and peaceful in itself.* But when something arises, it happens in a flash. We get lost in it

because we don't see it in time. This is precisely the point at which the Buddha said the mind gets overwhelmed by defilements, or, putting it into simple language, where the defilements slap our faces.

When the defilements slap our face, we have to do as they say because we can't beat them; they are the boss. Therefore, we must become their master, having power over them through awareness and wisdom, through the development of insight, through clear seeing, for example. When we can see like this, defilements can not come close, cannot arise, because we see the defilements now.

In order to see like this, we must practice in the right way; we must comprehend the origin of thought. It compares with someone who wants to have the light on, but doesn't know how to go about it; that person doesn't know the source that makes the light appear. He has seen light coming from the bulb, so he turns and twists at the bulb. He may continue with that action until he dies; but no light is going to appear because he's not doing things as they should be done. He doesn't know the starting point of the light. But someone who is smart, who knows the real source of the light, won't take hold of the light bulb. He'll just turn the switch, and the light appears at the bulb.

Practicing insight-meditation is the same. If we're clever and we know, see and understand according to the Buddha's way, we comprehend that *greed, hatred and delusion don't exist in us, that suffering of that kind really doesn't exist in us*.

Though we don't know the method, we want to deal with that kind of suffering. We want to find a solution for greed, hatred and delusion. We want to chase it away. So we practice meditation to develop insight, sit or lie down with eyes closed to get some peace; and we get peace, but that kind of peace is not the same as seeing clearly! It is ‘peace-in-the-cave.’ When

we're in a cave, we see inside the cave, but the cave itself we don't see. When we make a fire, it is true that the darkness disappears; but we're still surrounded by darkness, and as soon as the fire goes out, the darkness comes back, faster than the speed of sound.

Now, we come out of the cave and there is no more need to light a fire. Being outside, we can see inside the cave as well as outside of it. We see everything. This kind of peace is not the same as the other kind, it is not the same as the kind of peace we experienced when we were still in the cave. This is seeing clearly; and when we see clearly there is peace.

(That is why) I say that there are two kinds of peace. Peace-in-the-cave is one kind of peace. It is peace without seeing, without comprehending the cave. As for the peace-outside-the-cave, it is not that kind of peace. It is a peace as a result of seeing clearly. 'Seeing clearly' is a kind of peace.

What kind of peace is peace due to seeing clearly? It is peace due to the absence of greed, hatred and delusion. One is peaceful because he is not caught up in anything. This is peace due to seeing clearly. When things are clear, they're peaceful. One can call it peace or not call it peace, because the word 'peace' is just convention. This kind of peace is without defilement because one sees the defilements at every moment.

The Buddha teaches in this way, but regardless, this is what we want. We want peace. It's just that we don't know the method for turning on the light. When we do know the method, and the time comes to do it, we turn the switch and click!, light appears at the light bulb over there.

When we have developed insight in the right way and someone says something – good or bad – our awareness and wisdom do their job as fast as lightening.

The speed of awareness and wisdom that arises from developing insight compares with a cat and a rat. However fast

the rat is, the cat is on the lookout already. As soon as the rat comes jumping over, the cat grabs it, whack! At the moment the cat pounces on it, the rat dies of shock, that very instant. The blood doesn't run because the rat is so shocked, never been caught by a cat before. The cat eats the rat without blood flowing. It is the same with the mind.

When we are watching like this, a thought comes up and, whack! The thought is intercepted immediately because we see clearly and really know. There is enough awareness, it is in time; we can prevent and deal with the thought, and we conquer it. So the mind doesn't get concocted, and there are no defilements. This is the way the Buddha teaches. Therefore, to see clearly like this is the highest merit and wholesomeness in Buddhism. Or, to say it another way, it is seeing the Dhamma.

To see the Dhamma is to see what? To see the outer Dhamma, is to see materiality and mentality, or to see oneself acting, talking and thinking. This is one part. The other part is to see the mind as it is thinking. The mind is not anything solid that can be seen with the eyes. It has to be seen through awareness and wisdom. The Buddha talks about having sharp faculties, the faculty of sight. This is a deeper level of seeing the Dhamma. the ability to see like this is something that everyone already possesses without exception. That's why the Buddha said 'the Dhamma is there already.' When we were born this existed already; but it was turned over, just like something that is turned over and no one turns it back up. So we don't see it. Or it's just like something that is closed, and there is no one to open it up. But now, our Buddha opens it up or turns it upright so that people can see it immediately. This is the reason why, when the Buddha would go around expounding the Dhamma, those who listened with determination would open the eye with which to see the Dhamma, or they would enter 'the stream of Nibbana,' as it is

called.

The Buddha illustrated seeing the Dhamma in many ways. Lotuses or other types of flowers, whatever colour they may have, be it red, white, purple or whatever, are all ready to bloom when they get in touch with sunlight.

The method to develop insight is the same. If just this is pointed out, we simply practice at this one point; and everyone is able to do it because the Dhamma is there already. But if no one calls attention to this important point, we just keep fumbling about, and we don't know.

In reality, we all want to be without suffering. We just don't know the method to extinguish suffering. We only want what is good, but we don't know what evil is. When we don't know evil, we take it to be something good. When we don't understand that those things are bad, it is as if we're walking along the road and we don't want to step in dog droppings. When we don't watch our feet as we're walking, we'll step right into it; and it smells awful. We won't say that we want this stench, but in the meantime it is stuck to our shoes. So we go and wash it off, but sometimes the smell lingers on because it got kind of absorbed in the soles. This is just the same: we don't want evil but we simply don't know where evil is lurking, or how to wash it off.

Evil is to be deluded, to be caught up in ourselves, to not see our very mind and life, to not see our mind the moment that it thinks. To see the mind as it is thinking is to see the Dhamma, the Buddha says. This is seeing the Dhamma on the more subtle level.

The Buddha said at one point that virtue is the means to eliminate the crude defilements, concentration is the means to eliminate the medium defilements and wisdom is the means to eliminate the refined defilements. My teachers used to say this, but I didn't understand it.

Virtue, which is supposed to eliminate the coarse defilements, is not that kind of virtue. That is just virtue of society. Can we eliminate defilements by making merit, making offerings and keeping precepts? It is meritorious but it still can't deal with defilements. We have all made merit, made offerings and kept precepts; that is just virtuous conduct, but that's not what I'm talking about. I'm referring to the practice of Dhamma. The practice of Dhamma and virtuous conduct are different. The latter is merit; and it is wholesome, but it can't deal with defilements. So it's just a matter to do with society. The way to make merit, make offerings and keep precepts still differs from neighborhood to neighborhood, from village to village, from district to district and from province to province because it is still an affair of society. It is a matter of views and opinions; that is not yet the Dhamma. One does whatever on wants to do. One does things according to one's opinions and desires, doing things out of greed, like being in a cave. We see it in the dark, depending on candles, lit temporarily only. As we're making merit, we feel slightly happy. Like a lump of ice: it only stays in a solid state for a short time. It's hard to mold water into a lump, or to catch the wind and make it into a lump. It's not easy to do. How does one grab it? One might be able to grab some water, but not for long; it won't remain.

(Therefore,) the teachings of the Buddha are extremely deep and profound. Only people with ‘little dust in their eyes,’ or people who are determined and interested to use his teachings in practice as the way to do something about suffering, can understand it. But if we don't want those teachings and we're not interested in using them to do something about suffering, then the teachings of the Buddha are hard to understand, hard to figure out, because we don't look at ourselves. We don't see ourselves. Ordinary people

can only understand things that are solid, objects that can be seen with the eyes and touched with the hands. But on a deeper level, that is to say on the level of the mind, on the level of our life, we've never looked and never seen. But when we see and understand, we see something supreme and marvelous. ‘Marvelous’ means something that we've never had, seen, or known to be like this.

When we see, know and understand, we disseminate the teaching of the Buddha that we have practiced so that people who don't yet know may know, people who don't yet see, may see, and people who don't yet understand may understand. As for the people who are not yet interested in such talk, the Buddha said to just leave them, let them go. You can't get everyone to accept it. The Buddha was the same. When He was still alive, He taught, according to His vision, knowledge and understanding. As He saw and understood things, He would explain them. And we are the same; we must try to revive the teachings of the Buddha and spread them.

These days, there are plenty of people who claim to spread the teachings of the Buddha, but they understand little; they don't understand much.

Some people snatch teachings about ghosts and spread them; and then they claim that they are the teachings of the Buddha. Other seize the teaching of Brahmanism and spread them, saying that it is Buddhism. Others grab hold of the teachings of sects that revere angels; and they disseminate those teachings, claiming them to be the Buddha's words, and so forth. People who practice this way can't make head or tail of things; so the whole lot is (falsely) claimed to be Buddhism. This is an unfortunate state of affairs.

These days, we can see this quite easily: magical teachers bless medallions and recite incantations over amulets and talismans; they hang them around your neck or tie them around

your waist and tell you that you are invulnerable to getting stabbed by a knife, or getting shot by a gun. This is a misunderstanding of reality.

Some people teach respect to and fear of ghosts, and offer things to them. It goes as far as that! Some people teach the awaiting of lucky signs and auspicious times before going ahead with matters. If the omens are not good, they don't do it! Some people perform ceremonies and sacrifices to make requests from the angels for help in ridding themselves of bad things. These are not the teachings of the Buddha!

The Buddha doesn't teach us to bow to ghosts. These practices existed already before the time of the Buddha. They have existed since time immemorial.

(These) opinions are similar to being in a cave and lighting a fire: the darkness hides on the opposite side of us; it doesn't go far. As soon as the fire goes out, it's dark, and we can't get out of the cave. But when we stand outside the cave, we can look back into the cave and see the darkness; we can see the shape of the cave; we can look around us and see everything. Nothing is concealed from us. To see like this is not the same as before.

I'm telling you this so that you understand. When you practice, understand things as the Buddha teaches, then you are a disciple of the Buddha. When we see according to the Buddha's way, we don't have to be afraid of ghosts or angels. In the chants praising the virtues of the Buddha, it says that he is the teacher of gods and men. No need to mention ghosts; the Buddha is the teacher of even the gods. But we never see these angels; we don't know where they live, so we have to use some intelligence here.

We have eyes, ears and so on. The eyes are for looking, the ears are for listening, the nose is for smelling, and so forth. That's how we get to know things. We must see both what is

good and what is bad. Our ears get to listen to what is good as well as to what is bad; our nose smells both good and unpleasant odours. We know things this way. If we don't use awareness and wisdom, we'll follow our moods and go wrong in an instant. Once we have gone off, it's difficult to solve the problem; sometimes we can't solve it at all.

If we know that we have gone wrong, we listen and solve the problem. This is called being a pundit. We never heard it and never thought about it, but when we listen, we adapt and solve the problem ourselves. This is called being wise. But some people hear the teachings of the Buddha, and it just goes over their heads. They are people with thick heads; they don't listen. When one doesn't listen, one doesn't solve one's problems. These people have dust in their eyes; they are like flowers that are unable to bloom, as the Buddha said.

The Buddha gave this comparison. There exist four types of lotuses. The first kind has risen above the surface of the water and is ready to bloom as soon as the sun comes out. The second kind blooms after receiving sunlight for several days. The third kind is still submerged; and the fourth kind is still stuck in the mud, food for the fish and the turtles. It's like this.

When we listen, we must determine to listen; and, having listened, we must determine to put it into practice. We must practice within ourselves, not believe fancy teachings. Don't believe them. Like guns that won't shoot and knives that won't cut. The Buddha teaches with awareness and wisdom. He doesn't teach in *that* style. Have you observed it, these days, that in Thailand we have more problems because of the incantations? When we have amulets and medallions, we go and steal, rob, kill, drink and gamble, thinking that we are invulnerable. The Buddha says that this is wrong. Fools come into being in this way. Don't go and mess with them, don't

have anything to do with them. Instead of blessing medallions, better to bless yourself to be awake! Those incantations are just fantasy; they are for people without eyes, ears and a nose. It is wrong teaching. Even monks still teach it, until someone gets killed; and people scramble for the medallions as we can read in the newspaper sometimes. When someone has gone wrong, how can he or she practice rightly?

The Buddha affirmed, we are told, that whether Buddhism flourishes or degenerates depends upon the four types of Buddhists*. If there is progress, it is because they listen, and understand, and practice correctly in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha. Buddhism should prosper and be safe in the future. But if it degenerates or disappears, it must be because of the four types of Buddhists. If they have not listened properly, remembered wrongly and practiced in the wrong way, degeneration and destruction must follow. But the teachings of the Buddha prosper in themselves. Whoever practices accordingly makes progress and is safe.

Every time we make merit, we invite monks to come and chant. The monks chant, but they chant in Pali, so we don't understand. When we don't understand, what is sacred or auspicious about it? It is not so, because we don't understand. It's only auspicious when we understand that it is sacred and auspicious.

The monks chant: '*Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammasambuddhassa,*' and then, '*Buddham, Dhammam, Sangham,*' etc. This is supposed to be wholesome, but it is chanted in Pali, and we don't understand it. It is actually wholesome; but it is in Pali, so we should translate it in order that we understand.

*i.e. Bhikkhus, Bhikkhunis (male and female monks), Laymen and Laywomen.

Is it sacred to chant ‘*Namo tassa*’? Can we bless anything that way? No. First, it has to be translated; ‘*Namo tassa bhagavato*’ means; Homage to the Blessed One; ‘*Arahato*’ means One who is far from defilements, from enemies, far from danger, ‘*Sammasambuddhassa*,’ the Buddha sees like that, know like that. That's what we hear, so we should practice like that, according to the teachings of the Buddha, so we can be taken to be one who practices, following the Buddha. When people are shooting each other, stabbing each other, getting drunk or gambling, don't go close. This is being far from defilements. The defilements want to go, be we must stay far away.

Next, the monks chant ‘*Buddham saranam gacchami*,’ I take refuge in the Buddha, who can really eliminate danger. If we have confidence in the teachings of the Buddha, we can really eliminate suffering and danger. ‘*Dhammam saranam gacchami*,’ I take refuge in the Dhamma, which can really eliminate danger; it is true. If we have confidence in the teachings of the Buddha, we can really eliminate danger. ‘*Sangham saranam gacchami*,’ I take refuge in the Sangha, which can really eliminate danger.

But the trouble is that we don't have confidence! And so, we can't eliminate danger. To say that we don't have confidence is not quite correct. We don't understand. We don't comprehend. We don't know whether the monks who chant can eliminate danger or not. Maybe they don't understand either, because they don't talk about themselves. And so, we practice along, without comprehending.

After that, the monks chant ‘*Yo chakkuma mohamalapakaddo*,’ which means; The Noble One has the sight of wisdom and has removed the stain of delusion. Delusion is to be caught up in something. To remove delusion is to remove identification with things. ‘*Samam va buddho*

sugato vimutto,' when delusion has been removed, one is a 'well-gone-one': That is, one goes well, one comes well, one doesn't stumble into things or fall into a ditch. One follows the clear path; namely, we get out of the cave. To be out of the cave means to be beyond thought. If we live in a cave we're not willing to come out of it, so we don't see the cave. We never see our own thoughts, even once; from birth to death we never see our own thoughts. Some people say they know and see thought; but they don't see it, because they see and know it within the cave, so they are under the power of defilements. They can't eliminate delusion.

The teachings of the Buddha are for really seeing, for really knowing. If we don't see and know, our practice is faulty. Therefore, making merit, making offerings and keeping precepts; if we do it right, really is merit, is wholesome, it is virtuous and is Dhamma. But if it is done wrongly, it's not merit, it's not virtuous, nor is it Dhamma; and one doesn't get merit or anything wholesome. That's the way it is.

Then the monks chant '*Asevana ca balanam, panditananca sevana*.' This is the Pali Language. We don't understand it; but we think it is holy and is able to chase off ghosts, bad luck and misfortune. That's true, actually; if we understand it. Without understanding, it can't chase away anything.

'*Asevana ca balanam*' means we don't associate with fools, we won't mess with them, we won't have anything to do with them, we won't believe what they say. For example, people who drink booze, gamble, take drugs, quarrel and argue, using weapons – are these people fools or are they wise? The Buddha says they are fools; don't associate with them. '*Panditananca sevana*,' We respect things that are useful, we don't revere ghosts, we don't beseech ghosts. What are ghosts? A ghost is someone who does evil, speaks evil and thinks evil.

People who are foul-mouthed we call demons. Don't mess with that kind of people.

People who do good, speak nicely and think in good ways; they are just like angels. A good heart, just like the Dhamma! That's what we say where I come from. It is convention, these words, but it is true too. The Buddha teaches like this.

So when we venerate people with virtuous qualities, we don't do anything wrong and we don't speak improperly. This is what is meant by '*Puja ca pujaniyanam, eta mangalamuttamam*.' This is auspicious for us, it is auspicious to obey the teachings of the Buddha. Just as monks coming to chant is not auspicious in itself; it is not right when we don't understand.

Going deeper, the real fool, or the inner fool, is delusion; and the internal wise one is awareness-wisdom, the quality of knowing. Really comprehend this! That we're developing insight is in order to see clearly. Seeing clearly and (that type of) peace, are two different things.

If we don't feel our minds thinking, we still don't understand the teachings of the Buddha deeply enough, even though we may be making merit, offering things, observing precepts, developing tranquility-meditation and even developing insight-meditation. People may say that they are meditating, but it is still not considered to be profound knowledge. That is how I understand it.

Even though someone may never have entered a monastery, never listened to a Dhamma-talk, never observed the precepts, if that person feels his or her mind thinking and realizes it, that individual has come close to the Buddha. Or one might say that he or she abides with the Buddha.

Have you ever heard that the Buddha said, 'Whoever sees the Dhamma sees Me; whoever doesn't see the Dhamma,

doesn't see Me. Even though taking hold of a corner of My robe or of My finger, he doesn't see Me'?

Don't think that seeing the Dhamma means to see colours, lights, crystal balls or ghosts, angels, heaven and hell. That is just fantasy. It's not the Dhamma. To see the Dhamma, we have to see ourselves acting, speaking and thinking. That's one part of it. Another, deeper part is to see the mind as it is thinking. This pacifies greed, hatred and delusion. But if one listens properly and puts them into use, they are not too deep.

Insight can be developed easily by our studying and developing awareness. The Buddha teaches that developing awareness has great benefit. We know from the books that the Buddha said there are two things that are of great assistance, namely Sati – recollection, and Sampajanya – awareness. Teachers tell us to recollect before acting, speaking and thinking, and to be aware while acting, speaking and thinking. These are still mere words; the person who utters them might still not comprehend, or it may be that he or she might, in fact, know. We are not aware of whether that teacher does or not because he or she doesn't say so.

How do we practice with this? In addition to knowing the words, we must know the method of practice. It's not just a matter of learning how to talk, being able to tell others. Being able to talk is not the same as practice. In practice, we really have to practice; we have to train!

Suppose we have an iron ingot for making a knife. Can we cut anything with it? No, it is still a bar of iron. We have to melt it first and make that knife, or an ax or a hoe out or it, before we can use it according to its function.

To practice insight we develop awareness in this fashion and we will know according to the function and law of nature. If we don't know how the method works, we'll use it in the wrong way, straight off. The teachings of the Buddha are

useful, but if we don't know how to use them – just studying them, remembering them and then boasting about our knowledge – this is not right. It is boasting that we know more than others, using the Pali as a weapon. The 84,000 teachings of the Buddha are for studying in order to remember and then to use as a solution to suffering. Having studied them, we use them in order to abandon defilements. The teachings are not to be used for studying and then seeking profit, status and fame. The Buddha wants us to study, remember and then to use the teachings as a tool for dealing with and abandoning suffering.

When we have solved and abandoned suffering, we can work, make a living and buy and sell without suffering. That's what He teaches. It's not that after knowing the Dhamma, we don't work and make money. That's not correct. Don't understand it that way.

The word ‘defilement’ doesn't refer to money, cars or houses. It refers to greed, hatred and delusion, jealousy and oppression. Working to earn money so one can buy a car depends on our effort and on how much we save. This we consider as working according to our duties. If we can't save one dollar; we can't save ten or twenty dollars. But if we can save on dollar, then when we have ten or one hundred dollars, we can save it. The Buddha teaches us to save and to work according to duty. Parents as well as children do their duties. Teachers, students, policemen, soldiers, government officials and everyone does their duties. When everyone is doing his duty, the country is in peace, is cool; and we live without suffering. Be happy with the work you're doing; don't be happy with someone else's work. The wise say work in order to work; don't work in order to get. Work following your duty.

We don't understand this matter like this. Whatever work we do we just want to get. It is like this, it is working for the defilements! The defilements want to get. They command us,

and we suffer, because we are forced by defilements. When we have some project and we can't carry it out, we're disappointed, we suffer. This is because we don't work according to duty; we don't know how to work in order to work. So don't think like that, but follow your duty.

Suppose we come and stay here. We come do develop insight. We have to do it, whether we know or not. We have to listen to the teacher. When the teacher says to do walking-meditation, we should do it. We walk in order to build up awareness, feel these little movements. We know in full awareness the movements of the body; turning the hand up and down, raising and lowering the arm, walking back and forth, leaning to the right and the left, bending and raising the head, blinking the eyes, opening the mouth, swallowing saliva, breathing in and out, etc. This is called being aware. Train in awareness! See, know and understand. Get familiar with awareness! When the mind thinks, be ready, waiting for it with awareness, just like a cat and a rat. The mind thinks. We know, see and understand; and the thoughts come to a halt, right away. When thought ceases, it is not concocted further. Of this the Buddha says, 'Dependent origination is not being conditioned.'

The Buddha explains through 'dependent origination' that 'Avija is the condition for the arising of formations. Formations are the conditions for the birth of consciousness; consciousness conditions mentality/materiality; Nama-Rupa give rise to the six senses; the six senses concoct contact; contact is the ground for feeling to arise,' and it goes on until it turns to sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. That's how it goes.

Now, we see thought. We see, know and understand. Thought stops and so there is no Avija. There is no Avija because we see and know. Therefore, it changes into Vijja.

Vijja translates as seeing clearly. As for Avija, it means not-knowing. Avija is not-knowing; but, actually, it is a kind of knowledge, but it is not a clear seeing. Avija is to not see our mind; Vijja is to see our mind. This is Dhamma on the deep level.

This is the source of merit. It is the origin of wholesomeness; the source is right here. Problems and suffering are born right here. We have to study according to the Buddha's teaching. If we don't see this point, right here, it means that we don't see the origin of suffering, we don't see the origin of merit. They are opposites like this; there is 'bright' and 'dark,' there is 'white' and 'black.' When there is blackness, we don't see anything white; and if there is whiteness, we don't see blackness. When there is darkness, there is no brightness; when there is brightness, there is no darkness.

If we catch this point, there is no delusion. There is no greed, hatred and delusion. We don't have to chase it away! We think that they exist because we don't see them, we don't see the defilements over here. We say that we want to let go of defilements but we don't see them and so we can't let them go.

There Are No Defilements!

The method: to see your mind, right here! When we see our mind every moment, at all times, every second, this is called training ourselves.

When it is like this, when we are working and someone blames us or praises us, the speed of awareness really catches up with the good or bad things in the mind. It flashes in, really fast, faster than sound, faster than light, even faster than electricity or whatever is fast. Awareness that has been trained, the mind that has been trained, is like this.

I dare to insist and guarantee that the teachings of the Buddha are a pair with the world, they don't avoid the world.

Whoever can practice like this is called someone beyond the world. Being beyond the world doesn't mean going up into the sky. Being beyond the world means to be above the objects of the mind, beyond suffering.

When it is finished, there is nothing that can proliferate anymore. It is as we chant: '*visankharagatam cittam*' – the mind has reached the state that cannot be concocted anymore. That's what it's like!

Supplement

Biography of Luangpor Teean

Birth

Luangpor was born in the village Boo hom, Chee-ang kahn district, Ler-y province, on Tuesday, the 5th of September 1911. The name of his father was Jeen, his mother's name Som, and his family name is Indapiw.

Luangpor's real name was Pun Indapiw. The reason that he is known as Luangpor Teean, is that in the vicinity where he lived it was the custom to call someone according to the name of his first born child. Luangpor's first son was named 'Teean,' so relatives and friends called him 'por Teean,' father of Teean.* His wife's name was Horm, and she was called 'Maa Teean,' mother of Teean. Luangpor had five brothers and sisters: four brothers, namely Sai, Pooi, Oon and Phun, and one sister, named Wun. His sister, now called Aunt Norm, is the only sibling still alive. The others have all passed away.

Childhood

Luangpor's childhood was pretty much the same as that of other children who live out in the countryside, far from civilization. On waking up in the morning, he would help his parents with working in the fields and looking after the cows and buffaloes. In the evening, he would herd them back home.

Luangpor said that he never had a chance to study in a

*'Luangpor' is a title used for senior monks, meaning: Venerable Father.'

school because there was no school around where he lived. To study, one had to travel to a more developed area, and

communication at that time was not yet convenient. So Luangpor was not able to travel to a school far away from his village. Luangpor said that in the area where he lived, there was virtually no material development. He had never seen a train, a car, an airplane, or even a bicycle.

Novice-Ordination

When Luangpor was about ten years old, his uncle, who was a monk and had been studying in Ubon Rachatani province, came to ask the boy's parents to let him be ordained as a novice so that he could assist and serve the uncle. The name of the uncle-monk was Yakuporng Junsook, who had been ordained since he was very young; and he stayed in the robes.

Before Luangpor was ordained as a novice, he used to go to the local monastery where his uncle stayed, every morning and evening. This monastery was called Wat Phoo or Wat Bunpotkiri, and it was located not far from his home. Before going to the fields, Luangpor would take food and flowers to his uncle and pay respects; and in the evening, after hauling water from the stream, he would return to the monastery. After his ordination as a novice, his uncle taught him to do the morning and evening chanting and how to request precepts; and he would give the boy a Dhamma-talk. The monk also taught him about lucky signs and how to practice meditation, including walking-meditation. Luangpor learned the Lao Language and scriptural language written on leaves. They studied without writing, just by memory. At night, after studying, the uncle would take him to do walking-meditation. The uncle was diligent in practice, sometimes getting up at night to start walking. The path for walking was almost forty metres long; and Luangpor would walk beside him, about ten

metres away.

As for training in meditation, the uncle had Luangpor sit cross-legged, in full lotus position, with his eyes closed as he recited the syllable 'Bud' on the in-breath and 'dho' on the our-breath. At that time the uncle had several friends, monks, who taught meditation. Luangpor remembered one of them who taught him meditation. His name was Ajahn (Teacher) Sow. When Ajahn Sow saw Luangpor practicing 'Bud-dho,' he stated that 'One cannot climb a tree from the top; on has to start at the roots.' He had Luangpor count the breaths: in-one, out-two, in-three, and so forth until ten.

On reaching ten, one counts backward down to one and starts from there again, continuously. Ajahn Sow said that to practice like this is sacred. If one is stabbed he should practice like this and blow on the wound; the blood will immediately stop flowing. When one sleeps out in the forest, where there are tigers and ghosts, he should bless stones by practicing in this way that the monk taught, put them in a circle around oneself, and sleep in peace. The tigers and ghosts will be afraid and they will not dare to come close.

Uncle taught Luangpor to concentrate on a kasina by using a circle drawn with the feet, about a metre away, and concentrate on it until one sees light. In the morning one should look at the sun without blinking until the eyes get used to looking at the sun. Uncle said that one who can do this is a 'fire-eyed hermit.' When concentrating on someone, that person will collapse immediately; or one can create a fire through concentration. The uncle also had incantations to 'shorten the earth.' Luangpor said that his uncle was a tall man with white skin, like a Westerner. When walking behind him, Luangpor had to run to keep up with him. Later, Luangpor realized that the incantation to 'shorten the earth' was like this: Uncle had long legs, and one stride of his would equal three of

Luangpor's steps! Once, Luangpor went with his uncle to Laos, but because Luangpor was still a child, he cried whenever anyone talked about home. So, in the end he had to return back home.

Luangpor was a novice, staying with his uncle for one year; and during that time he learned quite a few chants. This was because the uncle had studied in Ubon and he had studied chants from Cambodia as well. When Luangpor disrobed, he was sorry that he could not study more of these superstitions. At that time he wanted to be able to fly, become invisible, have the celestial eye and ear, shorten the earth and be invulnerable to attacks with knives and guns, just like his uncle. In those days, in that area, there was still considerable belief in ghosts; a boy was expected to know protective verses in order to look after himself and his family. His uncle had compassion on him and taught him seriously.

First Monk-Ordination

When Luangpor was Twenty years old, he ordained again with his uncle. The head-monk of Chee-ang kahn district was his preceptor. Luangpor trained in meditation and chanting with his uncle, as before. He learned nothing new but developed what he had learned already. Besides this, he traveled, which was a kind of training; he didn't understand the real purpose of it. He stayed at charnel-grounds, fields close to villages, or in little huts in the fields close to villages so that going on alms round was not too difficult.

Lay-Life

Luangpor was a monk for six months and then disrobed. His mother had arranged for him to get married in his early twenties. His wife's name was Horm, a relative. Horm's mother was the younger sister of Luangpor's father. Both Luangpor and his wife had been fatherless from childhood. Luangpor stayed with his wife for a long time without having children, so they looked after the son of his wife's elder sister, who had divorced her husband. Later, Luangpor had three sons named Nee-am, Teean and Dtree-am. When Luangpor's first son was born, everyone called the father por Nee-am. When Nee-am was five years old, he died; and Luangpor's name changed to what we are now all familiar with. Luangpor's second son, Teean, died about two years before Luangpor passed away.

Incantations

Luangpor tells us that during the time that he was a householder, he used the incantations that he had learned from his uncle. Sometimes neighbours would ask him to act as a witch doctor, chasing off ghosts or curing sick people.

At home, he was regarded as the protector of the family. At that time, he was still interested in magic and religious chanting and he wanted to have psychic powers and be able to perform miracles. This was because certain stories from scriptures had an influence on him. He tried to accumulate more knowledge about magic; having finished learning with his uncle, he searched for other teachers. After his uncle had died, he heard that there was an Ajahn even more

accomplished than his uncle, living in Laos by the name of Yaku Boonmah Dornpoong. This teacher raised peacocks. He put a cover over their legs and released them. Westerners tried to shoot the birds, but were unable to do so. Luangpor spent a rains-retreat with this teacher. He learned a great deal of knowledge – or should it be called stupidity? – from this Yaku. For example, invulnerability-verses which all turned out to be worthless. Luangpor said: ‘A stupid person cannot teach a wise person, only a wise person can teach a wise person or can teach a stupid person to become wise.’

Inclination to Merit-Making

Luangpor tells us that he was interested in merit from the time that he was young; and he always used to be the leader of the village in merit-making-ceremonies. At that time, he was the head-man of his village, and people respected him a great deal. He was about twenty-seven or twenty-eight at that time.

He would encourage people to participate in making merit. Even to people who had committed serious acts such as killing, he still gave the opportunity to be included. There were many ways of making merit in his village. For example, sharing out rice during the rains-retreat. On the Buddhist-moon-days, once a week, the villagers would invite monks to give a Dhamma-talk at their homes. The villagers would gather together at that particular house. They would make sweets; their children would make Thai vermicelli and Chinese food; and they would offer the monks betel nut and cigarettes.

Luangpor said that at that time he didn't know, but afterwards he understood that in fact it is not meritorious to offer betel nut (a mild drug to chew on) and cigarettes to monks. It is in fact, encouragement to monks to indulge in bad

habits. We want to give up defilements, but we don't know what they are. We may think it is good – and that is what others say – but Luangpor's view is that it is not. Luangpor stopped offering these things to monks and told his family to do likewise. But what other people do is their business. Luangpor would not forbid them and was not interested in their criticism.

During the rains-retreat, the old people would spend the day in the monastery on the moon-days; some of the young people would go also, others not, depending on their faith. But Luangpor used to go because his uncle would teach there. After the rains-retreat the annual robe-offering-ceremony was celebrated. This was a big ceremony that lasted a month and had to be booked in advance. In addition, there were yearly ceremonies for making merit. All the villagers would help out. When the monks taught on these occasions, they would simply read from palm-leaves. There would be entertainment as well, with music. There was the 'bamboo-rocket' festival; once lit, the rockets, made in a variety of sizes, were as loud as an airplane.

In later days, Luangpor had this rocket-festival stopped because of the danger; and it was a waste of money. Another merit-making ceremony was taken up with many Dhamma-talks, given in a single day.

Profession

After disrobing, Luangpor worked in the fields and orchards, and he did a bit of trading. Eventually, Luangpor had seven boats for buying and selling on the Mekhong River between Nong Kai and Chee-ang kahn. His business did well, and his profits increased. Luangpor's father was also experienced in

trading by boat, but he had died when Luangpor was still small.

Afterwards, a department of agriculture was established, and things had to be transported. So Luangpor started to trade with Laos, but his family was still in Thailand. He made a good profit and sold his boats to buy a steamboat. Luangpor said that even though he was successful in trading, he was not happy, even while resting. There was still suffering, the result of thinking about money and the things he would buy and sell.

The Reason For Searching The Truth

Before Luangpor set our to practice Dhamma and understanding arose according to his method, he had practiced quite a lot of meditation already. But it was not enough to help him overcome suffering. When asked: What kind of suffering did you have before practicing?' Luangpor answered that, at one time, someone in Laos had asked him to arrange a robe-offering-ceremony in Laos. There were as many as five bundles of offerings, because many people wanted to participate. With these ceremonies there should be some entertainment, like music and movies. Luangpor arranged with his wife that she would look after the money business and the food. As for Luangpor himself, he would observe the precepts and receive visitors. In the morning, his wife asked: 'How much money should I give to the entertainers?' This question triggered great anger in Luangpor. He later said that he could hardly move. But he managed to repress the mood and not show it to his wife, and just said with a forced smile, 'That's your business.' But the anger remained there in his mind.

After the ceremony was finished and the family were having dinner, he started to think aloud about what had happened that morning: 'People who don't have respect are like

this.' He repeated it a few times so that it struck his wife's mind. His wife, having taken the children to bed, asked: 'You're angry about my asking you about the money for the entertainers, aren't you?' 'That's right,' Luangpor said. His wife said: 'What is wrong about husband and wife consulting each other about spending money?' Luangpor agreed with the words of his wife and realized that he was wrong, that he was unyielding and just tried to beat her in argument. His wife said. 'You're dissatisfied, and you have fallen into hell.' Luangpor saw that what his wife said was true. These simple words of his wife affected him so much that he took his wife to be his teacher. His wife had made things clear to him. Before, Luangpor didn't know that anger is heavy suffering, that it is like falling into hell. Even when making so much merit with the ceremony, he still felt as though he were in hell !

It seemed as if he had not gained any merit, because he felt heavy-hearted all day. But on hearing his wife's words, he felt better and could abandon the mood to some extent. But how to really deal with his thoughts, he didn't know. He resolved in his mind: '*If I can not conquer this kind of suffering, I won't give up practicing the Dhamma*.'

Luangpor thought abut this matter for years. He tried to buy and sell less, and in the end he decided to stop working altogether. And so he cleared up all his accounts and money matters with his colleagues. Luangpor was the kind of person who had to prepare things a long time in advance. It took him almost three years to arrange everything the way he wanted.

Luangpor met with a monk who had studied all the scriptures. He was a few years younger than Luangpor, and his name was Maha seejun. He had traveled down the Mekhong on Luangpor's steamboat and had stayed in caves and charnel-grounds. Luangpor had offered him a meal and looked after him at that time. When they met again, they talked together

about meditation from six in the evening until six in the morning. Luangpor asked many questions. In the end, the monk told him that insight-meditation can only be known through practice, there is no end to asking questions. Luangpor thought about this conversation and about practice for three years without actually practicing, just searching for a good teacher.

The Decision To Practice Dhamma

When Luangpor was over forty years of age, he completely stopped trading. He no longer had work to do and kept reflecting that people are born and have to die, not being able to take anything along with them. Rich people have to die; poor people have to die; what is there, then, that is of value? There is just evil and merit. In the end, he decided to go forth and practice Dhamma, the way to go beyond suffering.

He told his wife of his intentions, and she prepared things for him. But he did not tell her where he was going, nor for how long, simply saying that if he did not die, he would come back again.

Having reached Nong kai province, he got the news that his friend, the monk Maha seejun, with whom he wanted to practice, had gone to spend the rains-retreat at Loo-ang pra bahng, in Laos. There was only Luangpor Wuntorng, who was a former assistant district officer, who, having retired, had ordained as a monk. There was another monk by the name of Pahn, who checked people's progress in meditation with interviews. He was Laotian and had learned the 'dting-ning-meditation'* practice and the 'rising-falling' practice from Burma. When Luangpor arrived at the monastery, he hired some Vietnamese people to build him a hut.

Luangpor said that he used to be a self-willed person; his clothes had to be nicely ironed, otherwise he didn't want to wear them. So he hired some people to do that and also to prepare food for him. Luangpor paid them three hundred baht per month for that. But in the end, the monastery didn't agree with this because other people might get the feeling that it is necessary to have money and hire people in order to practice Dhamma. So they suggested that Luangpor should offer the money up to be used for food-expenses for everyone who was practicing, including those ordained and those not ordained. Luangpor agreed but asked to have one person to iron for him and bring him a hot drink with a biscuit in the morning. This, the monastery didn't object to.

*’dting-ning’ translates as moving-stopping: this is to be recited inwardly while making the same movements with the arms and hands as with Luangpor Teean's technique of the rhythmic-meditation (also called Dynamic Meditation or Maha-Sati meditation), the only difference being that with the dting-ning meditation practice, one uses words to label the acts, whereas Luangpor Teean strictly forbids that because it is still a kind of fabricating or creating of the mind and is therefore not pure or bare awareness. With Luangpor Teean's technique, one simply feels or contacts the existing sensation directly, in the present moment, no need to name the experience.

The Meditator

During the time that Luangpor was practicing Dhamma, there were altogether about thirty meditators: twenty-three monks and five lay-people – two men and three woman nineteen or twenty years old. As for the monks, they had all been ordained for several years; at least two years, some five years, eight years, twelve years or even fifteen years. There was also a senior monk with a title; he did nothing but hammer nails into things. He pulled down one of the huts and repaired it, making lots of noise. Luangpor kept wondering when it was going to be finished.

Another practitioner was Mr. Hoi por Mook, a trader who was acquainted with Luangpor and who had given him considerable advice about how to make a living. This man would come to chat with Luangpor while Luangpor was engaged in practicing. Later on, whenever Luangpor saw him coming, he would wrap his head in a cloth and do walking-meditation out in the sun. Luangpor hired some Vietnamese people to make a lot of noise or to start building a road in the middle of the field, in order to discourage him. Hoi por Mook caught on, but he presumed that Luangpor hated him. that was not the case, it was simply that Luangpor felt one should practice seriously, not waste time talking or doing other useless things.

Practicing and Knowing Dhamma

Luangpor Wuntorng instructed the attendees to ask for a meditation-object and to determine their time to begin and stop practicing. Everyone was enjoined to keep the eight precepts.

Luangpor had kept them since he was a novice. He was told to recite the word 'death' with every in and out-breath. Luangpor tried out this method: death, death, death. He started to experience doubts. It was as if there were two people in his head. One would say, 'What's the point of this? Lets go to sleep!' Another voice said, 'I came here to practice, didn't I?' It was madness! One moment he was diligent, and the next, he was lazy again. This practice was very similar to practicing 'Bud-dho' that he had done before. So, in the end, he decided to take a rest.

In the morning, he got up, washed his face, brushed his teeth and started anew. Then, Luangpor really practiced. He didn't practice like the others; he was really serious and really determined. This time he practiced the 'dting-ning' method using bodily movements, but without reciting the two words to label the movements. He was sitting when a scorpion fell on his leg, a mother with babies; they all ran about over his leg. Luangpor just watched. When the baby scorpions had all returned to their mother, Luangpor got a stick and let them climb onto one end. Taking hold of the other end, he laid down the stick outside.

In the blink of an eye, Luangpor had insight. He understood materiality-mentality, Rupadhamma-Namadhamma, Rupa-disease – Nama-disease. On knowing the latter, spiritual disease, he knew instability, impermanence and non-selfhood; not just knowing from the scriptures, but really knowing. Then, he understood convention. He realized how deluded he had been believing in all those silly verses and incantations to protect him and make him invulnerable. So much so that tears rolled down his face. Next, he understood religion and Buddhism. Then evil and merit; i.e., he knew now that evil means stupidity, and darkness in the mind; and he knew that merit is to be clever, to know, to hold brightness in

the mind, the mind that is clean, bright, peaceful, pure and serene – the mind of the Buddha.

This is what Luangpor knew in the morning. Actually, the knowledge he gained was even greater than this, but he only summarized it as topics. There was so much knowledge that he wanted to tell someone, give a Dhamma talk – even to the cows, the buffaloes, or a dog strutting past. He was obviously caught up in defilements due to insight; at that time he didn't know what that was.

Everyone has perception, and everyone thus has the ability to know, without exception. This is what he thought, and he felt like teaching people. He thought about his parents: Why did they have to die without knowing? What a pity! At about five in the afternoon, he took a bath and started doing walking-meditation back and forth between two trees. Close to seven o'clock, he felt a jolt, as if someone had shoved him hard in the ribs. Hey, who did that? He was alone; no one was there. Luangpor didn't see thought yet, instead he was looking for the person who had pushed him. Then a thought arose. Oh, the mind thinks! And a third time. Luangpor knew thought. It is similar to a cat and a rat. If there are rats at home, one should get a cat. At first the cat is small and the rat is big; when the rat appears the cat will grab it but the cat is not strong enough and the rat drags the kitten along. At first, thought will drag awareness along. Don't blame the cat. Don't blame the rat. Rather, give the cat plenty to eat; it will become fat and strong. Now, when a rat shows itself, the big cat pounces on it. That's the end of the rat. The rat dies of shock, and the cat eats the rat without any blood flowing. They say cats are more skillful than tigers.

Luangpor watched his mind; and when thought arose, he saw it. When thought is seen, it stops. It's like a boxer entering the ring. There is no time to lose. Go for it! Don't

rely on scriptures; the scriptures are within oneself. Luangpor knew the sensations of the various movements: moving the arms, the legs, the hands, the feet, the blinking of the eyes, looking to the right and to the left, raising and lowering the head, leaning to the right and to the left. He was aware he felt the movements, the swallowing of saliva, breathing in and out.

Because ‘knowing` is very fast, one knows a lot. Suppose ten people would touch Luangpor at the same time. He would know, really know, at the same time. It is knowledge all around.

Luangpor knew, saw and understood ‘objective matter.’ It refers to literally everything. And he knew ‘ultimate meaning.’ It is not knowing, it is seeing, understanding in a profound way, It means ‘reality.’ And he saw ‘changing conditions,’ the changing of states of people and animals; they alter.

This is what he understood at that time. It all happened very quickly. Then, Luangpor saw greed, hatred and delusion; not with his eyes but with his mind. A secret scar that others can't see but one does oneself. The scars of greed, hatred and delusion in their mind that people don't know about.

At the time that Luangpor was not at ease and had suffering when he was asked something by his wife, he didn't see it. He didn't see greed, hatred and delusion. He felt heavy, even though he had practiced a great deal of meditation. So his meditation didn't give him knowledge. But maybe other people would. But practicing this way, there was understanding. There were still feelings, perception, volition and consciousness, but no suffering because greed, hatred and delusion couldn't concoct anymore. In the time-span it takes to snap one's fingers, Luangpor saw defilements, craving, clinging and kamma.

These four things faded. Suppose his weight was one-

hundred kilos; it was as if sixty kilos had just dropped off him; actually, it felt more like eighty kilos, leaving only twenty. Becoming a Noble one occurred at this point.

Previously, Luangpor thought that being a Noble one* meant to shave the head and wear a brown robe; but now he realized that, even though he was wearing trousers, he had become a Noble one already! This was about seven o'clock at night. Luangpor was doing walking-meditation, and rapture arose in him; he felt proud that he was now a Noble one, or, one could say, an angel with heavenly sight. He saw, knew and understood, he contacted it intimately, he could respect himself. When he knew Rupa-Nama, he didn't feel like that yet. But now, he thought to himself, ‘This exists in oneself. Why didn't I search for it before, why didn't I make use of it before?’

He walked for a long time, lay down for a rest, and got up around two or three A.M. He lit some candles and put them on the side of his path for walking-meditation. Just then, a big red centipede, as long as twenty-five centimetres, crossed his path. It didn't notice Luangpor and went about its business. Luangpor was afraid it might bite him, so he got a candle to see where it had gone. When he didn't see it, he put the candle back in its place and continued walking back and forth very mindfully. Then, the understanding came: virtue is the means to eliminate the gross defilements; concentration is the means to eliminate the medium defilements, and wisdom is the means to eliminate the subtle defilements. The gross defilements are greed, hatred, delusion, craving, clinging and kamma. They've already faded and gone. Virtue had appeared; Luangpor understood the aggregates of virtue, concentration and wisdom.

*’The word ‘pra’ in Thai, means ‘Monk’ as well as ‘Noble one’; one can be either or both because the former meaning is still convention.

The five aggregates of form, feeling, perception, volition and consciousness are virtuous. This is not a matter of precepts. He understood feeling, perception, volition and consciousness to be objects for awareness: it is called Nama-Rupa.

That day, Ajahn Pahn came for an interview: ‘How is it going?’ ‘Nothing is going on, but I feel dizzy and exhausted,’ Luangpor answered. ‘Do you feel yourself sitting there? Where is your awareness?’ Ajahn Pahn asked. Luangpor said: ‘I feel myself sitting here and awareness is with me.’ ‘Alright, keep practicing,’ Ajahn Pahn instructed.

Luangpor wanted to have a good, long discussion with him because he felt very confident, but he waited for the next time.

When The Next Time Came

Luangpor was sitting on the ground, ready for any kind of question. ‘Well, how are you, layman from Chee-ang kahn?' Ajahn Pahn asked. ‘I am not in any mood whatsoever,’ Luangpor said. He knew that Ajahn Pahn wanted to hear of some problem so he could solve it. ‘Why is there no mood, no obstacle?' he inquired. Luangpor said: ‘Because I have no pains and nothing in my mind.' Next, Ajahn Pahn asked, ‘Did any knowledge arise?' ‘Yes.’ ‘What do you know?' ‘I know myself,’ Luangpor said. ‘How is that?' asked Ajahn Pahn. ‘I know the movements: sitting, lying down; I know myself.’ ‘Someone who doesn't know oneself is like a dead person,’ Ajahn Pahn remarked. ‘I've really died and I've been born again.’ Luangpor said. ‘Why do you say that?' ‘Because what is dead should be discarded. I've died from what is dirty and bad in the mind. The defiled and dark mind, the dull mind has died, but the body is still there'. That is what Luangpor told

him. Ajahn Pahn thought for a while and then asked, ‘Is salt salty?' ‘No, it is not.' was the answer. ‘Hey, why is salt not salty?' Ajahn Pahn wanted to know. ‘Because the salt is in the kitchen; I'm not contacting it with my tongue right now. ‘And pepper, is it hot?' ‘No, it is not; I don't taste it at this moment.' ‘What about sugar, is it sweet?’ Luangpor denied it, that is to say, he took the present as his foundation. Next, Ajahn Pahn asked, ‘What is blacker than black?’ ‘Black is black, there is nothing blacker than that.’ On being asked about white and red, he answered in similar fashion.

‘Well, then,’ said Ajahn Pahn. ‘suppose this is a forest and someone came to see me here, and on the way back he shot a tiger. Suppose you are over there and you were asked to come here, would you come?’ ‘Yes, I would, if I'm asked to go, I'll go. It would be disrespectful not to go.’ Luangpor said. ‘But,’ objected Ajahn Pahn, ‘a tiger will eat you.’ ‘I don't see any tigers.’ said Luangpor. ‘And would you walk on the path or take a short-cut through the forest?’ Ajahn Pahn inquired. ‘I wouldn't go through the forest. I would take the path.’ ‘If there is no path, I can't see the tigers coming; but if I walk on the path, I will see tigers straight away, and I can get away from them. But if I don't see them coming, I can't avoid them,’ explained Luangpor. Ajahn Pahn had no more questions and praised Luangpor for his answers. No one had ever answered as Luangpor had.*

Luangpor understood the difference between tranquility- and insight-meditation. If one looks at it from one angle, they cannot go together and are even opposites.

*It seems that Ajahn Pahn wanted to test whether Luangpor had still any fear because a fully Enlightened person is not supposed to be afraid, not even of death. (But it doesn't mean that one is reckless).

Samatha and Vipassana don't go together but they can support each other. Luangpor really understood this matter: with tranquility-meditation there is just peacefulness, and on being peaceful one should create understandings like the perception of unattractiveness through reflection. But with insight, one doesn't need to reflect. Teachers had told Luangpor that in order to practice insight-meditation, one had to study six topics, namely; 1. The five aggregates, 2. The twelve senses, 3. The eighteen elements, 4. The twenty-two faculties, 5. The Four Nobel Truths and 6. Dependent origination. Luangpor didn't study all that, because he had studied enough already; he knew many things since the time he was a novice. His uncle had taught him. But now, when he was practicing, the knowledge that arose was not just knowing from memory. It was not the same. Insight-meditation destroys defilements on all levels; like a tractor, wherever it goes plants and trees, no matter how big, are all uprooted. Greed, hatred and delusion are pulled out by the roots, defilement, craving and clinging are pulled our by the roots.

Luangpor saw the cankers of sensuality, being and ignorance. He saw that to be attached to peacefulness is what the canker of sensuality is about. As soon as he had seen them, it was as if a tractor pulled them out by the roots. The canker of being refers to being caught up in something; the words 'being' and 'birth' have deep meanings: they can mean the 'being' and birth of the body, or they can mean spiritual 'being' and birth.*

Whatever one calls it, it is just convention. The tractor pulls all of it out by the roots. The canker of ignorance means

*The word 'birth' also has the connotation of the momentary arising of the sense of self, ego or 'me,' in other words, one identifies with what one is caught up in.

to not know the truth, not knowing anything or just not knowing one's life. The tractor pulls it all out. Luangpor understood about evil and merit, where and how long one would be reborn if one performed evil or meritorious actions by body, speech or mind, or together.

Luangpor was walking up and down at 5 A.M. and it was just as if he took his clothes off – he didn't really do that of course – but he felt so light, as though he was walking about a metre above the ground. He saw his condition being broken. The state of arising/passing was right there. Both the body and the mind returned to their original state. There was a break-off. This state of arising/passing is the most valuable thing. The essence of Buddhism exists in everybody. What happened to Luangpor, everyone must experience. Whether one realizes it or not, one has to come to this point. Everyone is going to die for sure; this is real, this is a truth. It can not be otherwise; it doesn't alter. Whether one studies or not, whether one is rich or poor, we all have to die!

Death is a sure thing, it is directly ahead of us. Everyone should study and practice in order to understand it. When one understands, one is truly at ease; and one will be ready to die at any time. One no longer has to plead with death, because it is fun; one is delighted to die in whatever way. One is not afraid of anything whatsoever. This is called seeing, knowing and understanding the words of the teachers. Teachers used to say that the Buddha only cut His hair once, and it didn't grow after that. This doesn't refer to hair on the head, rather the mind returns to its original state and the body returns to its original state. That is why it is not necessary to study about the twelve senses, the eighteen elements, etc., etc. One can describe it in terms of the first, second, third Jhana and so on, or not, because one knows by oneself.

Sanditthiko, to be seen for oneself; Akaliko, not bound

by time. Luangpor knew the natural state; in this state, one doesn't have to do anything. He knew this in the morning.

The Buddha kills people: talk like this people don't like. In reality, the Buddha doesn't kill anyone, but he kills what is bad. When people develop awareness and wisdom, whatever is bad will die. It will disappear by itself.

What Happened After Luangpor Realized The Dhamma

After Luangpor realized the Dhamma, he stayed at the monastery until the end of the rains-retreat and then traveled back home. when he came home, he found his wife quite sick. She was not well and had sometimes fainted during the past three months – from the time that Luangpor had left to practice. When Luangpor had left, no one knew where he had gone. When Luangpor's younger brother asked Luangpor's wife where he was and received no answer, he had misunderstood and suspected that Luangpor's wife had killed Luangpor in order to get the inheritance. This misunderstanding caused her to feel very bad. At that time, she still could not get up from her bed. Luangpor told his wife that death is a natural thing. He instructed his wife to practice Dhamma in the same way that he had done it; and in the end, she also realized the highest level of Dhamma. His wife had always had a great respect for Luangpor and therefore practiced and obeyed him in everything that he advised her to do. He made her practice very intensively for a few years.

Another person whom Luangpor wanted to see practicing was his elder sister Wun, or aunt Norm. She agreed to practice, but her husband wouldn't have it. So Luangpor said

he would give him the field that belonged to his father in order that aunt Norm would be permitted to come and practice with him. This angered uncle Norm, who thought that Luangpor was making light of things. Luangpor had to ask his wife to point things out to uncle Norm. It just happened that uncle Norm's son, Norm, who was sick, died. Luangpor was not willing to go to his nephew's funeral, giving as the reason that ‘there is no use trying to help someone who is dead.’ This enraged uncle Norm even more, and it caused all of his other relatives to be surprised and to speculate that he was mad. In the past, Luangpor had always helped and protected his relatives. Why, they wondered, is he now like this? Everyone was angry with him. No matter who asked him to go to the funeral, Luangpor was unwilling to do so.

After the funeral was over, uncle Norm came to see Luangpor and asked about the method of practice. Actually, Luangpor had already explained it to aunt Norm, but uncle Norm wanted to hear it directly from Luangpor. Not long after that, uncle Norm had an eye-infection and became unable to open his eyes. He asked Luangpor for help. Luangpor was willing to help and told him, ‘I can help people who are alive, but I cannot help people who are dead.’ Luangpor took uncle Norm to the hospital in Nong kai; and after uncle Norm had been cured, their relationship became as friendly and close as it had been before. No matter what Luangpor said, there were no objections. Not only that, but the uncle became quite enthusiastic to practice according to Luangpor's method. He told his wife, Aunt Norm: ‘You don't have to do it, I'll do it myself first.’

Uncle Norm practiced continuously for one month and knew Rupa-Nama; and after practicing another two months, he was able to see thought. After that, aunt Norm also came to practice without Luangpor having to encourage her in any way.

Luangpor trained his wife very strictly. Even though he had organized a few retreats, his wife practiced without stopping. She practiced continuously, without letting up, being allowed only a very, very short break. Luangpor said, with a sense of humour, 'This person is not allowed to stop, I am in command here!' Luangpor felt that his wife had genuinely helped him a great deal when she clarified, that day, that anger makes one fall into hell.

That had been the reason why Luangpor decided to search for the truth. After one month and eighteen days, his sister, aunt Norm, knew Rupa-Nama, and she could see thought as well. More people came to practice. So Luangpor established a kind of retreat-center. He built thirteen small huts, with help from the local sawmill. Luangpor had helped them when he was a trader. The owner of the sawmill was not interested in practice though.

In less then two weeks the huts were built and the place ready to be used for insight-meditation. Luangpor went to see the head-monk of the province and told him that he wanted to revive Buddhism. 'How are you going to do that?' he wanted to know. Luangpor said he'd start retreats for insight-meditation. The head-monk agreed to that and wrote a letter to the head-monk of the neighbouring province. Luangpor took that letter to that province – Nong kai – himself.

Before going there, Luangpor visited the head-monk of Udon tani. Because Luangpor had an excellent reputation as a person who likes to make merit, listen to Dhamma-talks and practice meditation, Luangpor was supported in his intentions to start organizing meditation retreats by many monks and lay-people he knew, from several provinces.

Luangpor crossed the border to Laos in order to meet Ajahn Pahn, and he bought an amplifier with which he informed people about the coming retreats all along the

Mekhong on his trip back.

When Maa Teean had realized the Dhamma until she was beyond suffering, Luangpor consulted with his relatives about ordaining as a monk. Nobody opposed him, and so he let his son participate in a retreat before he himself was to ordain. When Luangpor was asked how many people had realized or seen the Dhamma in this period of two years and eight months that he was still a layman, he answered that those who knew the stage of Rupa-Nama were many, but those who had reached the end were few: in one hundred people, perhaps as many as twenty or thirty people, as far as he had been told.

Second Monks-Ordination

Luangpor ordained for the second time on the third of February 1960 at the monastery See koon meu-ang, at Boo hom village, Chee-ang kahn district, Ler-y province. Luangpor was forty-eight years old at that time.

Having ordained, Luangpor did his duty, that is to say, he taught the Dhamma to both lay-people and monks. He taught in his hut as well as in the hall. He spoke even to people on the street who approached him with questions. Sometimes he would be the one to ask something first, enquiring of the person he met about his or her troubles, how long he or she had been Buddhist and whether suffering had diminished or not.

This is a pertinent question because if there is still as much suffering as before, it shows that one doesn't understand the principles of Buddhism, only understanding of the ethics of Buddhism. That is not real Buddhism, because Buddhism teaches people to be wise and to be able to eliminate the cause of suffering.

The first year, Luangpor taught in the village where he

was born, and he then moved to the Chee-ang kahn district. At that time, Luangpor established two centres in the district and, besides that, he established another centre for the practice of insight-meditation in Laos.

Accused Of Being Communist

A while after Luangpor had organized his Vipassana-retreats, people started to accuse Luangpor of being a Communist because what Luangpor taught was in opposition to what those people were practicing. Luangpor taught the giving up of various conventional ways of practice that don't really aid in building up merit and accumulating wholesome deeds. For example, killing cows and buffaloes for their meat on merit-making occasions, or serving alcoholic beverages, or gambling, and so on. Performing these acts is not merit, rather it is unwholesome. People who misunderstood, therefore, accused Luangpor of destroying customs and traditions.

According to Luangpor, some people just don't know what merit is. This type of people cannot store up merit, or they make merit but it turns into demerit. For example, when lay-people are inspired and they cause a hall or monk huts (kutis) to be constructed together, the feeling of gladness and delight in that action makes the mind happy. This is considered to be merit. But when the construction has only just started, arguments arise and people's feelings get hurt; and it becomes demerit. One gets merit at the time that one is happy; but when anger arises, that happiness or merit is finished.

Luangpor compared it to a nice house, newly built, that we've just moved into. One day, we take kerosene, sprinkle it all over the place, light it, and the house is burnt down. Just one little match is enough to do it. After that, we can't use the

house anymore as protection against the cold and the rain. Merit making is the same. At the moment that we are making merit we're happy, but when we just get angry once, that merit is gone. So, making merit and maintaining it is similar to building a house and looking after it.

Keeping a house in good condition takes more time and is more involved than building it. Therefore, when one makes merit, one should try to care for it. Intelligent people would understand what Luangpor taught, but unintelligent people would not.

There were three types of people who would listen to what Luangpor had to say: the first type would understand and support him, the second type would oppose him and try to find ways to make things difficult for him, and the third type would not be interested. Those who didn't agree with his teachings suspected that he was a Communist and was receiving money from the Communist party. A government official arrived by plane to check out Luangpor and to investigate within the various villages. He talked with people who practiced as well as with those who didn't. He found out that Luangpor had practiced Dhamma since he was a layman and, having returned home, he taught for over two years before ordaining as a monk. Ever since, he had been teaching, but his teachings are a bit strong. For example, he often says that people don't know what merit is, don't know what evil is. When he was still a layman, he would make merit regularly.

This is what the officer got to hear from young as well as old people. Luangpor was not in the least worried about this matter of being accused of being a Communist. He just continued to teach as before. He said, ‘When we are doing what is good, the fact that others say it is bad, is their affair. On the other hand, if we're doing what is bad, but people praise us for doing what is good, we don't become good just because

they say so. So, words are only convention.'

Luangpor tried to teach people to understand that merit means the right balance. It's just like when we're building a house. We must know what pillars to use, how much weight they can take; we must know the size of the wood that we're going to use. If we need two metres, but we cut it at two and one-half metres, what is left is wasted. This shows that one doesn't know what is just right. If we get elated when someone praises us and dejected when we are blamed, it means we don't know what is just right. This can not be called merit, because one still veers off to the right and to the left and is shaken by words which are only just convention.

We have to live with what is just right, or with normality. Merit is normality, virtue is normality. Merit is the right balance. Virtue is the right balance. If there is no normality and no balance, it means there is no merit and no virtue. Talk like this caused those who didn't understand to find it too heavy and too high, but Luangpor just carried on teaching. The officer had a talk with the head-monks of the district and of the province, and they both insisted that Luangpor was not a Communist. It was simply that people don't understand his words. The head-monk of the district showed Luangpor more than ten letters requesting that Luangpor be chased away. Both the head-monk of the district, as well as the head-monk of the province, supported Luangpor to keep teaching. When the various villagers learned about this, the matter of being accused of being a Communist gradually was silenced and, in the end, stopped altogether.

The Ghost Of The Owl-Cliff

Luangpor spent two years in Laos; and for his fourth rains-retreat, he stayed at the owl-cliff in Ler-y province. He met two novices, named Samuk and Rord. they kept him company. When there was rice left over from what they had collected on alms-round, Luangpor would get the novices to dry it in the sun and sell it. The money they earned would be given to the novices' parents.

Luangpor trained the novices to practice walking-meditation. They were quite diligent, and they understood something of the Dhamma. Luangpor took the novices to take a look at the owl-cliff. At that time, there was a rumour that the ghost of the owl-cliff was very powerful. The cars that passed by it had to stop and make offerings with roasted chicken and alcohol in order to travel in safely.

The mother of the novices was afraid of the ghost of the owl-cliff. Luangpor told the novices to say to their mother that the ghost of the owl-cliff was afraid of the novices, and that it had to bow to the novices. But the mother got angry at hearing that. Later, Luangpor took the novices into the city. The mother of the novices went to look for them, but couldn't find them; so she went to the head-monk of the district. She heard from him that they were in the city and that she should practice the Dhamma when she went to visit them. This she did; and she understood the Dhamma to some level, enough to stop believing in the ghost of the owl-cliff. Luangpor said to the villagers who lived around that cliff, ‘How can the ghost of the owl-cliff have any power? It can't even eat the roasted chickens that people bring. The ghost is so stupid as that, but people are even more stupid! Dogs are never afraid of ghosts; even at night they still go to the charnel-grounds or into the forest. But people are afraid of ghosts, which means that

people are worse than dogs!'

Some people, on hearing this, were able to give up their silly beliefs. But others chose to become angry. Luangpor had the novices and another child eat from the things that were meant to be offered to the ghost of the owl-cliff. Nothing happened. After that, the superstition about the ghost of the owl-cliff diminished. Of the ten cars that used to stop and make sacrifices, only about three continued the practice.

Old Age

For over thirty years, Luangpor Teean has been assiduous in teaching people, without tiring or being discouraged by any obstacles. His disciples are quite impressed by this conduct.

In 1982, he started having symptoms of cancer. He had frequent stomach-aches. That year, in June, as he was teaching in Singapore for the first time, he became very ill. He had to stretch himself on the floor as soon as he stopped doing walking-meditation, and eventually he was admitted to the hospital in Singapore. Despite this, he still taught the Singaporeans, many of whom were interested in practice. The second time he was invited, in October of the same year, the disease had spread so rapidly in his stomach that it was necessary to fly him back to Thailand for emergency surgery, as recommended by his Singapore physician.

Luangpor had his first operation at Siriraja Hospital, and one year later, another one at Samitiveja Hospital. The doctors discovered that the cancer had already spread far when they operated on him the second time. Yet, Luangpor never revealed that he was in a great deal of pain. In 1986, he underwent a third operation as a result of the spread of the cancer to his intestines.

Even though Luangpor was gravely ill with a life-threatening disease that had an effect on the body that would have been too much for an ordinary person, he managed to continue to live his life in a normal way, normal in mind as well as in body. He still did his duty of helping people to understand the Dhamma as much as he was able. Because of this, the spreading of the Dhamma during this last period was quite extensive.

Even though in his last year his health was deteriorating critically, he put all his effort of body and mind into setting up a place in Ler-y province – called 'The Buddhadhamma Island Tup Ming Kwan' – trying to make it into a monastery for practice that would be of use to all people. Even though he had to travel to Bangkok two or three times a month for medical purposes, he spent his last rains-retreat in this place, Tup Ming Kwan. Luangpor wanted it to be a place that would produce people who know the Dhamma and are able to teach others.

In the middle of August 1988, doctors discovered that his right lung was inflamed. It was treated in the hospital in Ler-y. At the same time, the cancer had worsened. His health deteriorated rapidly now; and everyone was concerned, even though people knew that his mind was beyond being affected by the condition of his body.

One day, a disciple who was nursing him asked, 'Luangpor has feeling, perception, volition and consciousness, but there is no suffering, isn't that so?' Luangpor smiled and said: 'Yes, you're right!'

On 4 September 1988, Luangpor left the hospital and stayed at Wat Sanahm-ny, in Nontaburi province, close to Bangkok. Luangpor had stayed in this monastery for many years since 1977, putting Ajahn Torng Loo-an in charge for the first year. He spent nine rains-retreats there altogether. On 6 September, he expressed the desire to go back to 'Tup Ming

Kwan.' His disciples informed him that on the 13th he had another appointment with the doctor, but Luangpor said he would not return to Bangkok. Many people tried to persuade Lo-ang por not to go to Ler-y, but Luangpor said: 'A disease can be cured, but not life.' On the 9th, Luangpor traveled to Ler-y. With him traveled many monks and lay-people. His condition was now critical, and it was uncertain whether he could endure a plane-trip.

On arriving, Luangpor refused all medication. Even at that time, Luangpor had the kindness to give a short Dhamma-talk. On Tuesday the 13th of September 1988, at a quarter past six, he peacefully passed away in the grass-roof meditation-hall at the Buddhadhamma island.

At present, there are fifty to sixty monasteries in Thailand where Luangpor Teean's method of developing awareness, the 'rhythmic or dynamic' meditation, using bodily movements, is practiced; and there are two or three places in the U.S.A.: in Connecticut and near Las Vegas, Nevada.

Experiences in Practice by Monk-Disciples

Luangpor Kamkee-an Suvanno
Wat pah Sugato, Gaang Kroh district, Chaiapoom province.

Practicing Dhamma with Luangpor (Teean)

In 1965, a meditation centre at the Buddhayana forest, in Ler-y province, was renowned. Everyone knew that Luangpor Teean had established it. It was said that people who studied and practiced there would realize and really see the Truth. There would be no more doubt about death and rebirth, about heaven and hell, about path and fruit (Attainments). Some people persuaded me to take a look at it, because at that time I was trying hard with the ‘Bud-dho’ meditation method to get peaceful, which I was reasonably successful at; but I still had doubts about death and rebirth, heaven and hell, path, fruit and Nibbana. This made me think of Luangpor Teean all the time.

I kept looking for a chance to meet him. Before Luangpor Boontam, who is a relative of mine, ordained, we had talked together about meditation. When he ordained, he went to practice with Luangpor Teean, beginning or 1966. At that time, I hadn't ordained yet. I had the opportunity to practice the Dhamma with him at the Buddhayana forest in Ler-y. He taught the rhythmic-meditation and walking-meditation. At that time, I didn't like the rhythmic-meditation very much. I was used to practicing ‘Bud-dho,’ to sit still; and I was able to make the mind peaceful quickly. But Luangpor taught not to go for peacefulness. He taught to be aware all the time, to know the movements while doing the rhythmic-meditation and not to get caught up in peacefulness. It was

opposite to the method that I had been doing. Sometimes, I didn't feel like doing it. There was lots of resistance in the mind. Luangpor explained and showed me how to do it.

The things he would talk about, his knowledge, I didn't have yet; I couldn't do it yet. Luangpor said to throw away my knowledge and my way of practicing; this produced misgivings. Sometimes he talked in a challenging way, saying, ‘How much money did you get a month, when you were working?’ I answered, ‘At least one-thousand baht.’ ‘Alright,’ said Luangpor Teean, ‘You come here to practice Dhamma, to do the rhythmic-meditation and to do walking-meditation in order to be aware. If you don't get any knowledge, if there is no change in your mind, different from before, I will give you one-thousand baht as compensation. But you have to really practice and follow my instructions completely!’

That's what he said to me. Maybe he saw that I had a lot of views. In the end I decided to do it; I had come already and I'd try it out. I tried to go against my original feeling. I determined to practice the rhythmic-meditation to give rise to Sati-Sampajanya. When one builds up awareness, awareness is what one gets.

I practiced continuously. When thought would arise, I would be aware of it and come back to the dynamic-meditation. When peace arose, I would be aware of it; I wouldn't be caught up in the peacefulness. I knew the body and mind more clearly. There was more Sati-Sampajanya. I could keep up with the movements of the body and I could keep up with the mind thinking. Wisdom-knowledge arose: I knew Rupa-Nama; I knew the body and the mind according to reality, in levels within the basic stage of Materiality-Mentality. There was a shift in the mind, different from before. Doubt disappeared. I understood the difference between tranquility-meditation and insight-meditation. About sixty

percent of my suffering was gone.

I felt very confident in Luangpor Teean's teaching. My pervious knowledge just melted away. I used to study magic and superstition. I saw that that was just convention. The rites and rituals that I used to perform I could give up, just like that. I felt confident in what I was doing. I understood what merit and evil are. I understood about heaven and hell. I understood religion and Buddhism.

It was as if I was carrying one-hundred kilos and sixty kilos dropped off me when wisdom-knowledge arose. Practicing only that much and I felt so much lighter. What would happen if I were to practice some more? I really had a lot of confidence in this method of using movements in order to develop awareness.

Luangpor pointed out the levels of practice. He said, 'This is just the basic stage of meditation. Don't get attached to it and think you've got a lot of knowledge; there is still much more. You have to determine to keep on practicing. Work more with the mind and you will get to know the stage of '*ultimate meaning*.'

He asked me, 'Do you really see? Do you believe me, or do you believe yourself? I answered, 'I believe myself.' Luangpor was clever. He taught to see the reality of life; everyone must see like this in order for it to be right. I didn't have to look for a teacher anymore because I got the most perfect lesson in my life from a teacher who couldn't read or write.

Luangpor Teean's Conduct

In the year 1966, Luangpor still couldn't read Thai; he could only read Lao. He couldn't write Thai but he was diligent, both

in training to read and to write, as well as in teaching disciples. I've helped him with reading many times. Whatever Luangpor taught, he would practice; he would explain things and show us how to do it. His life was very simple, sitting and lying down, eating.

His daily life was orderly, He gave his disciples a lot of attention, never being worried about difficulties. He gave himself up physically as well as his personal belongings. He tried hard to use his life for others. He wanted people to really know the Dhamma. Even though more than thirty years passed, Luangpor's conduct never changed. I respect him as having been a person with the greatest virtues; this feeling will never degenerate in my life!

What Happened At The Buddhayana Forest

Those who lived at the Buddhayana forest in those days were determined to study and practice the Dhamma together as one. There were no papers with the schedule on it attached to the doors of the monks' huts, as is the case these days. There were twenty to thirty people there, but it was just as if there was no one there. It was really quiet. One had to be careful when asking questions because there was only just rhythmic-meditation and walking-meditation going on. Once, I asked a novice who was doing the rhythmic-meditation something; he wasn't willing to talk to me.

The teachings of Luangpor in those old days consisted mainly of just practice. In the early morning one could hear the sound of monks doing walking-meditation and the sound of dew falling on banana leaves. In Ler-y province there is a lot of dew; on hearing the dew dripping on banana leaves, one

knew that it was exactly 3 A.M. Everyone would get up and start to practice. The sound of footsteps of the walking-meditation could then be heard together with the sound of the dew falling on the banana leaves – tup, tup, tup.

The light of the lanterns was dimmed by the passing dust. In a day, there would be heaps of ants. I got the taste of the Dhamma that arose from developing awareness. I got more and more answers to the questions of my life.

We stayed in little huts; when it rained we would get a little bit wet; we got in touch with life without excessive comforts. When eating, we would sometimes pour some water from our kettle onto the chili that was beginning to run out – an immediate solution to the problem. The water for washing the bowl had to be poured together in one vessel, and then used to wash other dishes; after that it would be used to water the trees that had been planted.

The water for drinking and bathing was about a kilometre away from the retreat-place. When going to bathe, one had to find some container to put water in and carry it back. One had to fully look after oneself.

The young monks, on seeing the old monks carrying cans of water back to their huts, would carry it for them. Poverty made us use life in an orderly way without shrinking back; we were not afraid of difficulties. Sometimes, I would save the plastic bags that lay-people would wrap food in, to fix up the leaking roof. I put forth steady effort and was very enthusiastic. The walking-meditation path glistened from our walking so much; the wood in the hut where I would sit was marked from one's sitting a lot in the same spot. As I was doing the rhythmic-meditation or the walking-meditation, it felt as though there was only just this one person in the world; no division into this and that.

It would run counter to one's feelings to get an invitation

from lay-people to eat at their house and perform certain ceremonies; one would think about his walking-path and miss the seat in one's hut. Those places provided a meditator with peace and coolness, and gave him a sense of dignity. One would feel proud of doing walking-meditation and of the times that one would develop awareness by practicing the rhythmic-meditation. This kind of work is something that gives one honour in life; one doesn't become fed up with it.

Some days, while doing the rhythmic-meditation in the hut, Luangpor would come by; I could remember the sound of his footsteps. ‘Are you here?’ ‘I'm here, Luangpor.’ ‘What are you doing?’ ‘I'm doing the rhythmic-meditation.’ ‘Do you see outside as well as inside?’ ‘I don't see outside; I only see what is inside.’ ‘What do you do to see outside?’ ‘I open the door.’ ‘Alright, then open the door.’ When I opened the door, Luangpor told me, ‘Make sure you see outside as well as inside; don't only just see outside or only just inside. Keep the mind in the middle!’ Having said that, he continued to walk to the next hut.

I understood that Luangpor talked the language of the mind, that looking at the body and looking at the mind, working with the mind, must be like this. To get caught up in thought is wrong; the mind going out too much is wrong. One should be the observer. Whatever arises, watch it with the inner eye; that is to say, with awareness and wisdom. Don't want it, don't BE it.

In the morning and the evening, after the chanting, Luangpor used to give instructions. There were no tapes to listen to or books to read; we would only hear the teachings of Luangpor, and we would get to know the stages of practice that would arise in the mind from developing awareness. The mind would change progressively; one knows and sees by oneself.

The words of Luangpor, in dhamma-language, that point

things out, together with his diligent practice, made us realize that it is possible to understand, find and see the Dhamma. It can be done. One can be liberated. the short interviews were not just thought-out questions; it was coming from experience, the results of meditation. It had nothing to do with reflections or analyses through reasoning. Rather it is a fixed law of nature that exists already; it starts with *Rupa-Nama* – real things that actually exist. One gets energized continuously until there is not more ground for suffering to arise. There is not self anywhere.

Luangpor taught just this. He pointed it out clearly, just as if he would take us by the hand, not letting us think and guess about it.

When suffering doesn't have a base, it dries up, it doesn't sprout anymore. When the end of suffering is reached, there is nothing further to do. It is called according to reality, the remainder-less extinction of Nama-Rupa. I'm not sure whether this is in the scriptures or not; I'm talking according to actuality. It cannot be termed otherwise. Luangpor's teachings pointed this out crystal clear; it's not that he just taught in order for us to understand intellectually. He taught to BE! For example, a leech that sucks out blood. We didn't see it before; but when conditions are such that it drops off, we see it and we feel disgusted. But when the leech was stuck to us, we didn't know. This is similar to defilements in the mind. We give them the free hand as long as we don't know and understand. When we know, see and understand them, they slip off. We feel in the same way as with the leech. When we are disgusted, we know; and then there is no need to ask anyone. Our lives come to an end at this point. We begin to study and practice the Dhamma with the form of rhythmic movements and walking-meditation, developing awareness.

I don't know whether other forms or methods are like

this, also. I hold to this principle of developing awareness, using movements. Luangpor is my teacher. Whether this method can be found in the scriptures or not, may those who are intelligent reflect on it by themselves.

What I've been writing so far is only just a small part; there is still much more, but it is not appropriate to say too much at this time. I guarantee that one day, if you have time to do the rhythmic-meditation and develop awareness through walking-meditation, looking at the bodily movements and the thoughts in the mind, knowing them in time, able to chase and catch them; your existing problems and condition will confess and surrender because there is 'evidence.' Those things will no longer harm you. You will become free. Life will be deathless, beyond birth, old age, sickness and death!

The teachings of Luangpor spread gradually and continuously, until they reached the capital and went abroad. As long as there are human beings on this planet, of whatever nationality, if one studies one will find it just the same. I invite you to go ahead and study; whether you can read and write or not is not important.

When Luangpor was very sick, he still kept teaching. He really dedicated his life to others. At the time that Luangpor had not yet ordained, he tried his best to let everyone see what he had discovered. I have spent a rains-retreat at his home-village. The old people there, as well as the young, told me about it. Not only that, but I've seen small well-built huts, twenty or thirty of them, built with his own money so that people could practice. Also the food; which he would take care of by himself.

When Luangpor was still a layman, he was rich and held a good position. He was an important trader in Chee-ang kahn district, Ler-y province. He had a big steamboat to take goods along the Mekhong river. He would go as far up as Loo-ang

Prabahng (Laos), and as far down as Nakorn Panom (Thailand). In those days, one could freely trade between Laos and Thailand. On both sides of the river, people knew 'Nai hoi (the trader) por Teean.' His real name was not Teean, it was 'Pun,' but it was a tradition of people around there to call people according to their first born child. People thought it offensive to call someone directly by one's name. If we would call him Luangpor Pun, those people would take that to be a lack of respect.

When Luangpor was a layman, many people respected and obeyed him. He was the headman of the village; and he used to be the leader in merit-making ceremonies. He offered enough money to build a whole temple. There are many things about him that haven't been mentioned. I don't mean to boast with these things. He was just an ordinary person like us, but he was someone who was able to discover the Truth in this time and age. We should take him as our example.

Before practicing with Luangpor, he would say that he used to make merit, ordained, performed the robe-offering ceremony, built a ceremonial hall and did everything that is considered meritorious; but he didn't get to know the Dhamma that way. This made me think: 'Hey, I didn't do as many meritorious things as Luangpor, I probably don't have a chance to know and see the Dhamma.' But, in fact, it is not like that. Rich people as well as poor people can know, if one really practices and experiences bare- and full-awareness for a long enough period. Luangpor has been insisting on this all the way through. He challenged everyone and encouraged them to try it out and verify it for themselves.

I would like to say that the reason I am a disciple of Luangpor is not because of his biography, not because of his external behavior, not because of hearing his words, or because of what people said about him. But it was because I tried out

the method of developing awareness by using movements, and many, many results followed, until, in the end, there was nothing left of the word ‘suffering.’ This was because of practicing according to Luangpor Teean's method.

It is his teaching; to say that it is the method that the Buddha teaches is not incorrect. I'm not praising Luangpor Teean. I'm not bragging. I'm talking about what is practical, what is possible, what can be done in this life-time. One doesn't have to wait for death; everyone can do it, can have it, can BE it!

Luangpor Teean is my teacher. I have followed everything he taught me: rhythmic-and walking-meditation, in order to generate awareness, to see the movements of the body with awareness and to see thoughts in the mind with awareness; and to be the watcher of these two natural phenomena. Awareness and realization are the inner eye, they are the witness to the body and the mind until one sees these two natural phenomena and one gets the insight that they are only just material and mental things. They are not any self, they are just nature. Having seen it, one really knows that they are just Rupa and Nama, one knows how to deal with them and the problem is finished. One is beyond them.

Next, Luangpor teaches to look at the suffering that is associated with Rupa and Nama. we look at materiality first, which is Rupadhamma. When we look at it with awareness, we see that it is a heap or a mass of suffering. We breathe to relieve suffering, we eat to extinguish suffering. When standing, sitting, walking and lying down we change position in order not to have suffering. Then, we see Rupa-disease. We must find a way to solve sickness and pain. The suffering of the body can only be remedied; it cannot be abandoned. If there is no remedy, that's the end of it – that is what Rupadhamma is like. As for Namadhamma, it can be realized.

We watch the states of the mind, just as if we're sitting in a room that has windows; whatever arises, we see immediately.

Originally the mind is in a state of normality, but objects come floating in; they are like guests. One sees gladness and sadness. One sees the mind that loves, gets angry, has greed and is deluded. One sees all of it because one is the watcher. When we look, we will see; and on seeing we can let go. One doesn't become the object of mind. This is not the same as watching materiality.

The suffering of Rupa cannot be abandoned; one can only lessen it. For example, when one is hungry, one eats to solve the problem; one can not abandon hunger. The mind is not like this. The things in the mind can be completely abandoned; one can let go once and be rid of things for the rest of one's life, until there is no more birth, old age, sickness and death. If we put our attention on the right spot, it is not difficult. It is just like a key that fits its lock. One can unlock it right away without wasting time.

The principles of the four foundations of awareness can be compared to a key or to a perfect vehicle that one uses for traveling. One passes through continuously. The body, feelings, mind-states and objects of mind are stations that detain us human beings. It is hard to be free from them. But if we develop the foundations of awareness a lot, and put our body, feelings, mind and mind-objects in the boxing-ring, awareness will be the champion. It will conquer constantly because the body, feelings, mind and mind-objects are not any self; they will have to confess and surrender to awareness.

The truth cannot escape the truth; what is not true cannot withstand verification. The principles of the four foundations of awareness compare with a just judge who upholds uprightness. They charge suffering, the ego, the self, like, dislike, gladness, sadness, defilements, craving, being caught

up in things, the sense of 'me.' These things cannot arise. One could say that the foundations of awareness are the contraceptive-medicine to control the birth of suffering; suffering can not establish itself because one sees from the beginning that there is only Rupa and Nama.

When one sees from the start that there are only just Rupadhamma and Namadhamma, this immediately affects suffering. It is shaken. This matter is about ending suffering, it is about peace, it is about the remainder-less extinction of all suffering.

Luangpor Torng Abhakaro

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The Experience of Meeting Luangpor Teean

I am a monk from out in the country. My parents were farmers. Before I ordained, I made merit and made offerings, I would go to the monastery as the tradition prescribed, and as my parents used to do. At that time, I didn't practice yet. I ordained when I was nearly twenty three years old, in 1961. Having ordained, I studied in an ordinary monastery in Udon province. I practiced some meditation, but I didn't understand it very well. In 1968, I spent the rains-retreat in Chaiapoom province, and after that I learned to give Dhamma-talks. In those days, in order to give talks, one had to study with a teacher.

It so happened that a layman from Ler-y province came to visit his relatives here, and he had heard Luangpor Teean speak Dhamma with Ajahn Mahaboo-a torng, the latter being one of his first disciples. He practiced with Luangpor Teean, and he was invited to give a talk to the lay-people at my Wat. This man kept talking to me, telling me all about it; and it struck my mind how he could talk about the Dhamma.

I had been a monk for seven years but still didn't know or understand Dhamma. This made me doubt, and I felt ashamed of myself. I had studied some scriptures, but where was the Dhamma? Ajahn Mahaboo-a torng had studied until he had a degree and still practiced too. Where is the Dhamma to be found? If I stayed to be a monk for many years, when I gave a talk there might be meditation-monks present; and then I would be embarrassed. So I thought to myself, this year I have to go and practice the Dhamma, I have to go and study the Dhamma

with Luangpor Teean to know and understand. As for learning how to give talks, it could wait.

At that time, I was imagining that one would probably get psychic powers from practicing meditation, and that one would be able to dive into the earth, become invisible, disappear and those kinds of things, because that is what I had read in books. It is said that one could get the divine eye and ear, and I thought that it really was like that. That would be great! So I decided to find a teacher. I had very high expectations; they pushed me onward.

I went to see Luangpor Teean at the Buddhayana forest in Ler-y province. I arrived in the evening and asked to see Luangpor, but he had gone to his home-village to open a meditation-retreat there. I wanted to go after him; at that time, I had very strong confidence (in Luangpor). I wanted to see what Luangpor Teean looked like. However, the monks told me to spend the night there first, and the next day they would take me to him. I agreed. I had a talk with Ajahn Mahaboo-a torng but I was still thinking that I wanted to see Luangpor Teean! The next morning we set out to find Luangpor Teean at Boo hom village.

We arrived around ten o'clock in the morning. I paid my respects to him, and he asked me, ‘Where do you come from?’ I told him that I ordained at my home-village in Udon tani province and that I had been studying for seven years. I told him about my doubts and that I wanted to practice the Dhamma with him. He didn't say much. He asked, ‘Are you really interested?’ I said yes. He asked, ‘Are you going to practice sincerely?’ I said yes. He said, ‘Practicing Dhamma is easy. There is no need for ceremonies and rituals.’ I liked that. I had already decided that if he told me to recite ‘rising-falling,’ I wouldn't do it, because I found it was embarrassing. But he was talking about practicing in a simple way, being at ease,

using movements. No need to close the eyes while sitting, raising the hand, lowering the hand, making movements. Hey, that sounds simple! He showed me how to do it, and I followed him. When I was able to do it, he let me do it by myself. I felt a bit embarrassed at first. I am someone who easily feels ashamed. He told me to stay alone in a hut. I practiced alone at Boo hom village for as long as fifteen days, but I still didn't understand.

After that, I practiced at the Buddhayana forest for about a month. Luangpor came to see me every day, two or three times. He would ask me with a few words about whether I understood or not. I didn't.

Later on, one day, after the chanting, I sat chatting with Luangpor and Ajahn Mahaboo-a torng. I told him that I would probably not understand if I practice like this. I had been ordained for seven years and still didn't know, still didn't understand. Luangpor asked me if I understood Rupa-Nama yet. No. I asked Luangpor if I could practice intensively for a while, which means not to go for the chanting, not to go on alms-round and just practice by myself in my hut. Would Luangpor allow me to do that?

Luangpor said: 'Hmm, nobody has ever done that before.' He thought and talked for a while and then agreed. It was decided. As for the food; it was up to Luangpor to tell a layman to bring it over to the hut.

I practiced intensively for about a week and I understood; it was just basic understanding. At first I didn't see Rupa-Nama, but later I did, I understood. Altogether, it took me about a month. Now I understood the meaning of ordination, even though I had been a monk for seven years. I didn't know before, I just studied from books. Before, I just shaved my head and wore the brown robe without understanding anything about the way of life of a monk.

Understanding arose as I was doing the rhythmic-meditation, raising the hand; I was aware and knowledge arose. I knew without anyone telling me. What I knew, I had never heard and had never read in any book. Knowledge and understanding arose by itself. I saw Rupa and Nama. I saw Rupadhamma and Namadhamma, I saw Rupa-disease and Nama-disease, I saw convention. I saw impermanence, instability and non-selfhood. I saw evil and merit. I saw religion and Buddhism. I saw until the end. I knew all this in an instant. This is the basic stage.

I knew this after having practiced intensively for seven days, but altogether I had been practicing exactly one month. I knew Rupa-Nama. I knew many things; it was the knowledge that comes from the defilements due to insight, it is the knowledge of analytical knowledge. Luangpor had a way of teaching, but I didn't know it. Even while doing walking-meditation, there were things in my mind. I was thinking about my father; I have been an orphan since I was five or six years old. My mother looked after me. I thought about my father. He was someone who didn't know anything. He didn't know why he was born; he didn't know and see himself. But I couldn't help him. I could only do something about myself.

The next morning, Luangpor told me to stop the intensive practice; he was afraid others would want to follow my example. It would not be fair if he didn't allow others to do it also, if they asked to do so. That's what he said. No one had done this before; one would just practice continuously, working at the same time. There was no intensive practice. He told me to stop, so I stopped. Yet in my mind, I still wanted to continue practicing alone. But out of respect, I stopped. Whatever he said, one had to follow it.

When I was first practicing, he didn't let me look at thought, until I had stopped for four or five days. At that time,

I threw myself into it. It was powerful, I was caught up in analytical knowledge and joy. I was bold, I wanted to be alone. I was not afraid to have a Dhamma-discussion with anyone, no matter how many degrees he might have. I knew the matter of materiality-mentality well. I had never experienced something like this in my life. This is the way it is! The Buddha teaches what it means to be a monk!

Even though one has ordained and studied, if one doesn't practice this, if one doesn't know and understand like this, it can be taken that one hasn't ordained as a Buddhist monk! Before, when studying the scriptures, I thought that it was just a matter of the past in India.

Luangpor asked me, ‘When it is like this, can you go back home?’ I said, ‘I can, I'm confident to speak with the teacher.’ My teacher had been a monk for over ten years and had studied the pali language; he was a preceptor and the head monk of the vicinity. He had a lot of theoretical-knowledge. Luangpor wanted me to go and teach.

I felt that there was something unfinished, at that time; I had only just started. Why did Luangpor say that? I guess he had a reason for it. Luangpor wanted me to talk with my parents and relatives, he wanted me to talk with them about my experience. That's how it was in the old days; but now he has changed to another style. But I'm not like other people; others Luangpor would urge on. At that time, I had ordained exactly seven years.

Venerable Mahaboo-a torng was one of the first disciples, later Ajahn Kamkee-an, Ajahn Boontam and Ajahn Sommai came; they followed each other closely. After this, Luangpor had me look at thought. When one first sets out to practice and one knows and understands materiality-mentality, almost everyone gets caught up in analytical knowledge. Some people experience strong feelings of rapture, others don't.

Luangpor didn't let them watch thought, if that was the case; instead he had them do work. Others he just let be. But he said not to be interested in thought, just let it go. The mind was thinking all sorts of good things and ideas, about the future as well as the past, thinking about teaching people; but Luangpor said not to follow it. He said to let the thoughts 'cool down,' let them come to rest.

Luangpor taught with a kind of psychology, he had a way to watch peoples' minds, to watch those who came to practice. He would ask: 'How are you, is your mind good or not? Is there something in your mind or not? Is your mind in its original state or not?' When the mind was in its original state, just like there was nothing there, not knowing or seeing anything at all, he would tell that person to watch thought.

The Buddha was enlightened because He worked with the mind. To watch the mind with awareness. One has to look right here. Luangpor advised to look at this place. He said: 'Know thought and let it go.' He had us do the rhythmic-meditation, to be aware of movements and to watch and see thought. That's about all he said and then he would vanish.

I watched thought for nine days and I saw 'objective matter, ultimate meaning and changing conditions.' It was in the evening that I saw it, there was a change in my mind. When I saw Rupa-Nama there was another kind of change but on seeing ultimate meaning, there was another change. I felt very confident at this point, I realized that I was a Noble one. Being a Noble one is to be found right here; it is not to do with shaving the head or wearing brown robes. I saw that it was right here!

Luangpor taught whoever came to practice to look at the mind, to watch the various thoughts. When there is a change in the mind, everyone should know and see it. This was his method of teaching. He would ask the practitioners what they

saw and understood. We would inform him that we knew or understood ultimate meaning or whatever it was. Formerly, I understood that in order to be a monk (a Noble one), one had to shave the head, wear brown robes and stay at a monastery; but now, I understood that anyone can be a Noble one, women as well as men; one can wear clothes of whatever colour, one can have any nationality, speak whatever language or uphold any religion. This was not yet clear when I knew Rupa-Nama. I understood it but not yet clearly; but on seeing ultimate meaning, awareness was more clear and I saw things that were more refined.

I looked at thought until I understood ultimate meaning and various other things. Luangpor advised me to watch thought and to cross over to ultimate meaning. Another change took place. I saw greed, hatred and delusion, and after that there were more changes; I understood and saw in stages. I understood sickness and death, heaven and hell, evil and merit. But I didn't know in the same way that Luangpor knew; Luangpor knew in stages but my understanding was different.

It wasn't long before the mind changed a third time and it changed completely; I saw greed, hatred and delusion at the same time as objective matter, ultimate meaning and changing conditions. After that there were insights continuously; I saw virtue, I saw sensuality, etc., until I knew everything. I understood what the Buddha taught! I practiced alone and didn't talk with anyone.

One day, Luangpor gave a talk. He spoke all the way from the beginning of practice. I listened to what he said. I thought, ‘Hey, that's exactly what I've experienced and seen!’ When the talk was over, I went over to talk with him. We just talked very briefly.

Since that day, for me, whatever someone may say or teach, I am completely confident that the method that I've

practiced with Luangpor, the method that Luangpor teaches, is a short-cut, is a straight way of practice, is a method that has nothing to do with ceremonies and rituals.

The paths, fruits and Nibbana that we are doubting about, that we're searching for, that we're trying to attain, have nothing to do with studying; one can study or not study. It is another thing altogether. I really am confident about it!

Counting from the day that I started to practice by myself, about one month and twenty days had passed; from the outer bark to the heart-wood! On the last day, I sat doing the rhythmic-meditation – I mostly sat, I walked less – it was as if I came to an end, as if I was finished. but awareness was still good, I still felt everything clearly. I was thinking by myself, ‘Am I crazy or not? No, I'm not; the eyes still see, the ears still hear and I still know coming and going. I'm not crazy. Why is it like this?’ At that time, I didn't know yet. But when I knew, I realized, ‘Eh, this is not wrong; this is really what the Buddha teaches!’

I went to talk with Luangpor and informed him that it was like this. He said, ‘Birth has ended, being has ended, the practice has finished!’ Luangpor used to say that the Buddha cut His hair only once and that the Buddha kills people, but most of us don't understand these comparisons; we don't know what has been cut. But when I experienced it, I knew that things are like this. When I talked with Luangpor, we didn’t talk very long; when I knew, he just let me go.

During the last stage that I was watching thought, I looked at my mind changing continuously, in periods, in stages. But there must be an object to know; if one knows without an object to know, if one knows absent-mindedly, it shows that it is not right, it is still wrong. There must be an object constantly; one has to see constantly.

I completely understood about the training in virtue; the

higher training in virtue, the higher training of the mind and the higher training in wisdom. I knew all of it! But I can not speak in the same way that Luangpor did. The way he used to talk was that things have to be like this and like that, but what I saw was more like an immediate liberation. Luangpor has another style. It goes in stages. My way is different. Altogether there were five shifts in the mind; it happened very quickly. With the last one, I knew the state of arising/passing that Luangpor used to talk about. They say, 'The eye sees a form; it arises and passes. One hears; it arises and passes. Something comes in contact with the body; it arises and passes.' This is what's in the scriptures; anyone can say it, but this has nothing to do with the state of arising/passing. It is something different.

I can really guarantee this method. At this time, with Luangpor having passed away, I can insist that the principles of the method that Luangpor teaches are right. If one really practices, one will get results, regardless of who it is; one can be ordained or not be ordained, it is not connected with having accumulated virtuous qualities in the past. It doesn't depend on anything. This is something different altogether. That's the way it is!

Practicing intensively in order to be aware; these are just words. One keeps to oneself, one doesn't talk with anyone, one is alone in one's hut; practicing awareness will become more continuous. This is external practice that people can see, but if the internal awareness is continuous, then, even though one doesn't stay alone, it is also intensive practice. But it is difficult, it is not easy to be constantly aware all the time. But if one can do it, it is intensive practice. Some people can do it without difficulty, wherever one may be. Among one-hundred people there may be one or ten who can do it like that. At first, it is quite hard though; one can not yet catch the awareness,

and there are a lot of thoughts. Awareness can't stand up to the thinking; there is only little awareness. But when practicing for a long period of time, the awareness gradually increases. But at first, one sometimes feels disheartened; awareness arises with difficulty.

When I first practiced with Luangpor, I sometimes did some walking outside the hut; but, later, when I practiced intensively by myself, I mostly was inside the hut and didn't go outside. I used the posture of sitting more that the posture of walking.

One day, as I was sitting, practicing awareness, making movements in the sitting position, for one moment it was just as if things happened very fast; it was as though it happened in a flash, like a flash of lightning. To use Luangpor's expression; it was like a blink of the eye or a snap of the fingers.

At that time, it was as if there was something heavy and I threw it off. I felt light. I knew I was light because I had never experienced this before. I felt that something was different. But there was awareness. It didn't go anywhere. I knew that there was lightness. Awareness was stable all the way through; even while being asleep, I knew.

When awareness is perfected, dreams during sleep will become less or they might stop altogether. Ordinarily we think a lot, but when we develop awareness, thought becomes less and less. In the scriptures, it is said that Noble ones, or those with awareness and wisdom, don't dream; this is talking according to the books. In the daytime we think and at night we dream. One knows one is dreaming; it is similar to thinking. One knows, sees and understands it; and so one knows at the time that one is dreaming.

Developing awareness through making movements with the hands, if we find that it is not convenient to do so, we can be aware of other movements such as blinking the eyes,

breathing, or whatever. Awareness can be practiced in many ways; it is universal, it can be applied to our duties and our work. But what is important is to know, to know at that moment, knowing within oneself. We make a movement or we take hold of something. Know what you are doing! There must be one point or other to know; without having a focus somewhere, we can't catch awareness. The knowing is the most important; if we are aware of some part of the body, we will automatically know other parts that are moving because they are connected. If there is awareness within, one knows while working. It is like turning on the light; suddenly there is brightness. It works at the same time. It connects. Just like a tight rope. When it is cut, everything jerks.

We should train our minds to be with awareness and watch our thoughts. Never mind if the mind thinks. It is not that we try to stop thinking. Go ahead and let it think! But look at it. We are just the observer. Observe it continuously and let it go. Trying to train like this, one will make gradual progress, until one reaches 'that point.'

All things arise from a cause; things pass because the cause is no longer there; that is what monks teach. But we don't know what the cause is. The monks teach 'cause-condition, object-condition,' etc. There is a point where causes are finished and conditions are finished. We don't know where they went. No one followed to see what happened. Whether one knows or not, one doesn't see it. We shouldn't call this point the end because it would be encouraging people to do evil. It would be misunderstood by people who still don't have enough understanding. Therefore, the way of teaching must be a skillful one. Luangpor said: 'There is no coming and no going.' Once can say as much as that. If we were to say that there is no life after death, it would just be the end of the matter and people wouldn't do anything. They would call it wrong

view that one who does good doesn't get rewarded, or doesn't get merit from meritorious actions. There is no heaven and no hell. This is a wrong teaching.

There is no coming and no going; reflect on it yourself. It's up to you to figure it out or not. Study it for yourself, know and see and be it for yourself. That is better than what someone else might say. When you are and have this (knowledge), you will be at ease. Others may want to be reborn. That's their business; but we don't come from or go anywhere. We stay here. In reality, if we understood what the end of life really is, we would be at ease. Everything would be done easily and in comfort. But as it is, we don't understand, so we act out of not-understanding; we act in an ignorant way. To act with knowledge is different. There are people who know, but people who don't know still don't know, even when they practice. They are not sure and not confident. But for someone who knows, whatever happens, he or she is sure; whether one practices or not, one is confident. Because one knows. One can practice or not; it really is very simple. The Buddha teaches to practice simply. When we get to 'that point,' we see that the Buddha's teaching is very simple. It is so simple that nothing remains to be said, or there is nothing left to teach. What is there to get? There is nothing to get!

Putting it simply: The Buddha teaches to stop, doesn't He? He teaches people to stop. But we don't stop. We're not willing to stop. When we stop, it will be finished, there is nothing. But the body still goes on living; one still eats, one still does various duties and practices, the body still moves. But inside, there is stillness, there is not wanting; there is coolness. It has stopped, it is enough. We could talk in terms of path, fruit and Nibbana, or whatever.

There is not birth, there is not death, there is not aging, there is not sickness, there is not going, there is not coming.

These words are convention; words spread out and enlarge.

So, may all of you be able to train yourselves and prepare yourselves. Try to let appear that which exists already, and when the time comes that the breath stops, it will really be very easy.

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The Path That is a Path

The word ‘path’ here doesn't mean a path on land, in the water, in the air or a foot-path; but it means a path to be traveled by the mind. From suffering to no suffering. From problems to no problems. From darkness, complexity and confusion to brightness, peace and coolness.

The Buddha is only the one who pointed out the way; ‘Akkataro tathagata.’ Whether one travels on the path or not depends entirely on the individual who chooses to travel the path. Whether one acts, speaks and thinks in a good or bad way, is a personal matter. Whoever practices in accordance with the teachings that the Buddha introduced will inevitably be someone with brightness, will make progress in life and in work, and will not create problems for society.

By contrast, whoever has no interest in the teachings of the Buddha will experience suffering and will drop into darkness and delusion. Such a person doesn't know the direction that life should take. Such a person is ignorant of what is what and harms both self and others out of delusion and lack of understanding through bad behavior in body, speech and mind. Such a person is under the influence of greed, hatred and delusion.

Described in the biography of the Buddha as well as before the time of the Buddha, some practiced physical torment of self; and it was widely believed that the seven or eight

absorptions were the highest of attainments. The Buddha saw that such was not the way to completely escape suffering; it is just away to temporarily become peaceful or to subdue oneself, like putting a rock on top of the grass. The Buddha rejected those methods and sought the way out by working with the mind.

He continually observed with awareness the conditions that, without pause, arose in the mind, changed and passed away. This caused him to realize the Truth, He found the answer to everything; He was the perfect Buddha. He knew right as well as wrong.

In sum, the Buddha's search for six years to find a way out, through all the various methods that existed in those days, were all just deluded ways, wrong ways, closed ways. They were dead ends, they were paths that are not paths. Awareness to continually watch the movements of body and mind in accordance with the form of the four foundations of awareness highlights the importance of the section (in that sutta) which stresses (1) the postures and (2) Sampanjanya or awareness directed towards the body. It is the means to access and come into contact with the basic objects of insight-meditation, that is to say, to know Rupa-Nama, Rupa-doing, Nama-doing, Rupa-disease, Nama-disease, impermanence, instability, non-selfhood, convention, religion, evil, and merit.

This is the initial stage for the practitioner. To know and experience these phenomena is to enter the highway of the Dhamma; and at the same time it is an arrow that points to the final destination: the end of the end or the end of suffering, which is the highest goal of life. When we have reached it, we will have answers to everything.

When knowing and seeing the truth according to the way things are in reality, the mind begins to change from one thing to another through the power of ultimate Truth. Previous

behavior and tendencies get reformed; and, at the same time, that which is really true in life becomes manifest; one loses one's naive beliefs about, for example, ghosts and angels, lucky omens, heaven and hell. One starts a new life, right there, at that point. Just that little bit of awareness is the vehicle that leads life to the end of all suffering. When life reaches the end of the end, it is as if one lives in a new world. It is a world of spiritual freedom, safe from spiritual suffering; it is a safe and peaceful realm.

Life hat has come in touch with the highest Truth in Buddhism will be established in the now, and it will be very simple. It will be light, comfortable and without worry or doubt. There will be no danger. I can guarantee that one who has come to the stage of 'ultimate meaning' will definitely not lose his or her way. He or she will have nothing to do with ghosts, angels, auspicious timing, 'sacred' things, hell, heaven, death, rebirth, and so forth. This is because one who practices the Dhamma by developing awareness in this fashion must know and contact objects all the time. That person must review the stages of practice and investigate what one knows, what one is watching, where and how. All of this one knows instantly. It is said that the Truth will not leave someone who is real; and, in the same way, someone who is real will not discard the truth.

The Secret of Changing the States of Mind

Take this little feeling, this awareness, as the starting-point. Know when a thought pops up in the mind. Just know indifferently, know it and let it pass. There is not need to pull the mind back and do not let the thought pull you away. Awareness does its duty of watching by itself. *When awareness*

keeps a close and careful watch, the observer and the observed are separated things, and one doesn't get entangled in thought. There will only be pure awareness in the present. At the moment that there is not greed, hatred or delusion mixed up with the feeling, one will automatically know from deep within the mind that 'A change in the mind has clearly taken place.' And in the end of the end, that small awareness will have become 'a hidden power' in each and every posture.

We know Luangpor Teean from meeting and talking with him, from reading his books, from what others have said about him and from practicing. But I know him as the one who gave me a new life.

The principles for conducting one's life in a simple, light and comfortable way, without worry, were passed on to me from experience gained when I was close to Luangpor, continuously and for a long period of time. I have spent six rains-retreats with him. I use to think, in those days, that I would stick with him forever. To get a new life is like reliving life anew, or one could say that it is 'dying and being born again.'

'Dying before death,' being born again, my being born in the Dhamma, approaches now its fifteenth year. At present, life is in its teenage-stage in the Dhamma. I'm not much attached to places or people. I feel that my experiences of life are very little. It's not yet enough, but as far as practice goes, it is sufficient. I know what to do, and I don't suffer.

Let me go back a bit. Formerly, when I went to see Luangpor Teean, I thought I would dedicate myself to him; whatever he would advise I would determine to do, as a lesson or an experiment. I determined this because I had strong determination and an aspiration to prove myself according to his principles; and I was confident that this way that I had chosen was the last way out. With such determination,

opposing views, opinions and thoughts were erased altogether. I had no doubts, I had no problem at all.

When I started to practice with determination, fully and continuously, by being aware of standing, sitting, walking, lying down, bending, stretching, moving, blinking, breathing, swallowing saliva, leaning to the right and the left, raising and lowering the head, eating, drinking, going to the toilet, dressing, and so forth for three days, I was aware and completely awake. Awareness was purely in the present; there was no past or future. Materiality and mentality appeared clearly and cut off doubt. I saw Rupa as Rupa and Nama as Nama. On seeing it, doubts disappeared. I won't talk about my personal knowledge, but I'll say something directly about the principles that are the technique of practice: To practice intensively, alone in one's room, is a wonderful opportunity for someone who is seeking a way out for oneself; and it presents an opportunity for those who are keen on this way of practice, for those who are real, and for those who are genuinely determined and who practice sincerely, to really prove this style of practice.

One can choose this solitary practice for either seven days, fifteen days, three months, one year or three years. Those who volunteer to practice can choose according to what is suitable for oneself. One should stay alone and keep silent in one's hut or whatever place it may be. A monk or teacher would advise one in developing awareness and could be consulted. He or she is a friend to help the practitioner to really go for it, without having to do anything else. Just to work with the mind, to observe oneself, to be with oneself. To be determined to just watch over the movements of body and mind, all the time. Not to read books, not to receive or write letters, to be cut off from the external world temporarily, just for the time that one is practicing intensively.

Everyday, someone would bring food over once or twice a day, depending on what one agrees on with the teacher. The teacher, who is like a good friend, would pay close attention to the practitioner and advise or warn him or her when necessary. Things can be discussed with the teacher, and problems or obstacles can be overcome that way. When one practices, results will appear by themselves.

Luangpor Pee-an Attapunyo

Wat pah Santisukkharama, Pahkchom district, Ler-y province.

I was born around 1905 in Pahkchom village, Ler-y province. My father's name was Jun oo-an poot torngsee and my mother's name was Gee. I had five brothers and sisters; I was the oldest. I ordained when I was over twenty. At that time, Luangpor Teean was still a novice, and he came to study with me. I was a monk for two years, and then disrobed. After that, I had a family. My wife's name was Kampee. I had four sons and one daughter.

When I was about fifty years old, I heard that the layman Pun Indapiw (Luangpor Teean) had opened a meditation-retreat at Boo hom village. At that time, I was a layman. I was interested, so I went to practice with him.

It took me about eight days to understand Rupa-Nama. I saw materiality, I saw mentality. Then I saw impermanence, instability and non-selfhood. I saw things arising and passing away. Then I saw thought. I saw the origin of suffering. After that, in 1961, I ordained (again) and continued to practice. Luangpor showed me the way, and I saw ultimate meaning. When the stage of ultimate meaning was concluded, I was instructed to look at virtue and the aggregates of virtue, of concentration and of wisdom. I carried that out until I saw all three of them.

Virtue here is the virtue of path, fruit and Nibbana; it is not conventional virtue. The five, eight, ten or 227 precepts are conventional virtues of the world. Having seen virtue, concentration and wisdom, I next saw the defilements and cankers. They were cut away, just like that! I cast away the cankers of sensuality, of being and of ignorance; I was completely free from them. I broke away from ignorance and reached the end of suffering after having practiced for about

ten years. At that time, I felt that Luangpor Teean was my teacher, was my father, was the one who gave me life in the Dhamma; and I was confident that what I had discovered was the Dhamma that the Buddha was enlightened to.

The Dhamma that the Buddha was enlightened to is: suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path leading to the cessation of suffering. It was like this for sure. It is complete! One sees suffering, sees the cause of suffering, sees the extinguishing of suffering and sees the path that leads to the end of suffering. It is this way. This is the middle way that the Buddha talked about. We must do it like this.

There isn't much to practicing: there is the rhythmic-meditation and there are the four foundations of awareness: looking at the body, feelings, mind-states and mental objects. Watch the movements of the body; see the body in the body, watch feeling; see the feelings in the feelings, watch the mind; see the mind-states in the mind-states, to watch mental objects; see the mental objects in the mental objects. These four things, practice them well. When one is determined and has established these four foundations, one can have realizations.

Practice continuously, all the time. Awareness arises whenever one is ready; it is to be seen here and now. The practitioner should see for him or herself. It is not thinking, guessing or expecting; one knows by oneself. One knows with this kind of knowledge; it exists already. One knows as the Buddha knows; knowing like this, seeing this, understanding this.

Confidence must be the plant of practice, effort is the rain, a sense of shame to do evil is the yoke and plough-handle, the mind is the rope, awareness is the plough-share and goad, and the person who ploughs is the field. Confidence means to believe; effort means to strive; patience means endurance. But

we don't endure. When there is a reason, anger arises; one can not pull it out. One must really practice in order to know the truth. It is not a joke; it is real. One has to investigate it. It is something that one should encourage others to practice; it can be passed on to others. The truth is like this! Whoever has confidence will see this, and whoever doesn't have confidence won't see it. Anyone can do it, men as well as women. Luangpor used to say, 'Brothers and sisters can all do it.' If we train every single day, it's like taming a tiger in the forest.

The real Dhamma is within us, one can not find it outside oneself; it really isn't there! But when we look for it in ourselves, it really is there! Don't be lazy; abandon laziness! Abandon it; it can be abandoned! Don't be heedless; heedlessness is the source of death. One must use patience, endure things, make effort in practice and practice continuously. When sitting: don't stop; watch! When lying down: watch! Watch while standing and walking; watch continuously. If we see, it means that we are in time. If we don't see, it means that we're not in time. Be in time! Keep up with thought. Thoughts lead us to suffering, lead us to laziness. We all have suffering because of thought. Solve the problem with this knowledge. When thoughts come up; don't follow them. Let them go but we don't go with them. Watch and let the knowing come back; establish awareness and know; don't get deluded by thoughts. Once one is deluded, one will be caught up continuously, one will think and think again, many things. This is suffering; when there is thought, there is suffering. When one can stop thought, there is happiness. That's the way it is. These are the principles of practice.

Luangpor Boontam Uttamadhammo

Wat pon torng, Gaang kroh district, Chaiapoom province.

At the end of 1966, I went up to practice with Luangpor Teean at the original Buddhayana forest (it is now a teachers college). I went up there because Ajahn Mahaboo-a torng invited me. He told me that he had met an old monk who taught Dhamma at the Buddhayana forest. He had good aspirations and firm conduct, he taught directly and was aiming in particular for the destruction of defilements. There was no inclination to psychic powers, and he didn't practice for gain. He didn't seem to be a foolish old monk; he would certainly not lead one onto the wrong path. When I had heard about this, I became interested. I changed my mind about going to the south.

After the rains-retreat of 1966, I decided to go to Ler-y province, and visited Ajahn Mahaboo-a torng. When I arrived that day, Ajahn Mahaboo-a torng was doing intensive practice at another village. When he heard that I had arrived, he presented me with a book to give me some courage. As for me, I paid my respects to Luangpor Teean and told him of my intentions. He immediately introduced me to the rhythmic-meditation. When I started to practice, my ideas of going to the south disappeared, and I determined to really practice. I practiced from the end of October until March 1967 before I understood Rupa-Nama. Then I went back home to tell the people there about it. When I went back to Ler-y, I had invited three monks to come along. With the arrival of the rainy-season, Luangpor Kamkee-an, who was still a layman at that time, came up to practice also, which made me feel very happy.

I was impressed with the way of practice of Loo-an por because it was a natural way of practice. It was simple, convenient and relaxed. Luangpor was also very much at ease.

He was a good example; he would lead us to live and eat simply. He was not conceited. Even though he was a monk who ordained later in life, from out in the country, who couldn't read or write, he would not be inactive. He still trained himself incessantly, he was diligent in asking me to help him to learn how to read. He studied with me to read and write. That year, be began to be able to read. He was an excellent example to his disciples in doing walking-meditation. When he took a rest from that, he would get out the table and train himself to write. There were these special qualities in this aged monk. We kind of felt ashamed. It was hard for us to equal him in the way he ate and slept. He was not embarrassed in any society; rather, whatever he expressed was a fine model for that company. I was increasingly impressed.

The reason that I left Luangpor and went to stay somewhere else was not because I was fed up with the teachings, but I was fed up with teaching. In the year 1968, there were a lot of monks and novices, Thai novices as well as Laotian ones. Luangpor had Ajahn Mahaboo-a torng and myself teach them the theories of Buddhism. And so the time to practice diminished. I didn't like to teach. When the rains-retreat came, Ajahn Mahaboo-a torng left to spend the rains-retreat on the banks of a river in another district. I was teaching by myself; no one helped me. As for Luangpor Kamkee-an, he left to do intensive practice at Boohom village.

I thought hard; I reviewed again and again. I thought about Potthila, a teacher in the time of the Buddha who had 500 disciples every year. The Buddha was not satisfied with this, He didn't take delight in Potthila being such a big teacher. The Buddha called Potthila 'an empty person.' even in the midst of people. This was to make Potthila realize that he was not superior and to let him get fed up with just teaching. When Potthila was more and more driven in a corner, he finally went

to find a good place to practice.

I thought the same way. That year, when I had finished teaching the monks and novices, Ajahn Mahaboo-a torng came down to participate in the examinations. In the year 1969, Ajahn Mahaboo-a torng , Ajahn Torng-in, Ajahn Ging, and I; altogether the four of us, set out to travel to the mountains of Chaiapoom. When we arrived we stayed under our umbrella-like tents.

After some days, we moved to a place that is now a well-known monastery. The land was offered in that year by several lay-people. The other three monks left to spend the rains-retreat and then left again. In 1975, Luangpor Kamkee-an came up to stay with me until 1979. That year, I returned to my home-village and stayed there until the present.

Luangpor Songkrahm Dhammawaro
Charnel-ground, Gaa dam district, Mahasarakahm province.

Brief Biography of Luangpor Teean Cittasubho

A friend of mine, who is a monk, told me that there was an old monk who practiced in a different way than other methods by using natural movements of the body, not keeping still. When walking, one walks in the ordinary way; it is simple and comfortable. There are very few ceremonies; but the mind is emphasized as the important thing. When I heard that, at that time, I was indifferent; I didn't see anything particularly interesting in it. I was still a 'city-monk' at that time.

Around 1973-1974, I had the opportunity to join in an insight-meditation retreat organized at a monastery in Bangkok. I met Luangpor Teean there for the first time. A monk told me to watch his manners. On first meeting him, he seems like an ordinary old monk. That was my personal feeling at that time, which is not the same as it is now. He didn't play a role in the spreading of the Dhamma as he has now, and he was not famous. There were not many books or tapes of him. Those who were searching for the Truth didn't know him. I just observed him from a distance, and when the retreat was over we parted.

In the middle of 1979, my seventeenth year as a monk, I met Luangpor for the second time at Boohom village, Chee-ang kahn district. Ler-y province. I began to have confidence and interest in really practicing. It just so happened that there was a retreat going on there. There were many new and old practitioners. At that time, my personal feeling towards Lo-ang por was one of indifference. I didn't see anything different

from other monks in other monasteries, except for the form of practice. I just listened with my ears; I didn't listen with my heart, as I do now. Looking was the same. I just looked with the external eye, looking outside of me all the time; I wasn't very interested in looking at myself. Therefore, I just had suffering and confusion; I didn't see the internal value of one who has Dhamma.

As for Luangpor's biography, from when I first met him up to the present: He has always practiced evenly; whenever I met Lo-ang por, I felt ashamed of myself because of the conduct that he showed us. His daily life was very simple. As for the details of the biography, he has narrated a few things. He ordained as a novice when he was eleven years old, and he used to practice meditation with a monk who was a close relative of his. He learned many magical formulas. Sometimes, when he gave a talk, he would tell the practitioners about his previous experiences and his biography. He used to make merit, make offerings and keep precepts, as the custom is. He even offered enough money to build a ceremonial hall. He had really a lot of merit.

In the end, he developed awareness by making movements and understood the Truth. He understood Rupa-Nama as they are in reality; he was confident in the Truth. That is the teaching of the Buddha. His doubts disappeared, and he was bold to guarantee what he had realized. From then on, he regularly challenged those who were interested to have faith and prove it. There were always people who were searching for truth, practicing with him without let-up. Later on more and more people followed him. What I'm writing is not very detailed. It is just what I know and have seen. I stayed with him for a short period only.

I spent a rains-retreat with him once; he was not yet very old then. His daily activities: Getting up for morning chanting;

one could see him practicing. Every day he would do walking-meditation, without exception. He would teach mostly by being an example. He was a diligent old monk. He couldn't remain inactive. No matter whether it was with the body or with the mind, he worked all day long. He never missed the chanting. After the translated chanting, he would give a talk on practice, every morning and evening.

The talks were to rouse and stimulate the practitioners to have confidence, to be motivated to study and practice towards higher levels.

Eating and all his whereabouts were part of the practice; they were Dhamma-teachings to whoever would see it. This was my personal feeling. Other daily activities were similar to those of other monks. The only difference was that he had constant awareness, for a long period of time.

One thing that impressed me about being with Luangpor was that he obviously had no suffering; he had spiritual freedom. Wherever he would be or go, he would be at ease. He controlled his feelings very well. No matter what posture he would be in, he would always be even. He would talk little; he'd talk only about things that were necessary and useful. I've never seen him mingling with others. When there was something to discuss, he would only just talk about that particular subject. He was always ready with awareness.

The most impressive thing was that he couldn't read or write but was able to understand the Dhamma to a very deep and refined level. I understand that he discovered it because of his efforts and diligence. Through meditation, wisdom arises.

He regularly taught this type of developing awareness through movements. Besides this, there were still many other things that I was impressed with. His tools for spreading the Dhamma were, as far as I could see, just the body and the mind. He emphasized Rupa-Nama as the principles. He would

talk about it often; in the morning, day-time and evening. If he didn't go anywhere, he would not be inactive; one would get particular lessons in practice that were aimed at the arising of awareness and wisdom. Those teachings could really be used to extinguish suffering in daily life. And one would get a special lesson, namely that this method of developing awareness could be used while working, without any friction.

Besides the regular teachings, he would also inquire about the results of practice from those who practiced. Sometimes he would let practitioners who were confident practice intensively, practicing continuously for several days. Most of the time he would demonstrate the practice and be an inspiring presence. Sometimes he would lead a retreat in other provinces, each for five or seven days, depending on what was suitable.

As for my personal results of practice, I feel that many changes have taken place in my mind. I would say that I've discovered a new life. I have confidence in myself. I feel at ease, and things that I used to doubt about I no longer doubt about. I see the arising of fear, suffering and trouble in the mind. I understand life. My life has not been wasted, having discovered the method to reach the Truth in the Buddhist way. I hold it to be a really excellent and amazing thing. It befits the wise saying, ‘It is something that the wise must know for themselves.’ I would like to assure you that is true; if there is real practice, there must be real knowing, real seeing; and the ‘heat’ and suffering in the mind will really be extinguished!

Experiences in Practice

Desire is the root-cause for human-beings to search for things, according to their level of awareness and wisdom, their position, function or instinct. Four-footed, two-footed and creeping animals also go around searching for things, just like people. But we, people, have more intelligence. We have more ability to find what we want. Every kind of animal, including human-beings, loves life and wants to survive. This is a natural and ordinary thing for all beings. The only unnatural thing is that, however much we humans may find, it is never enough. No matter how much we eat, we are not full; we don't know what enough is. We're unable to be 'full.' This is very important. Desire that has no limit, desire that is uncontrolled. Craving leads to suffering. Not knowing, or not knowing in time, the suffering and bad results that come from wanting is the fuse that gives birth to desire. They are always connected.

The above considerations were about to transform the writer into a practitioner of the Dhamma. As for the experiences in practice that I've seen and known, they are certainly amazing and strange. The real thing is very refined. One is not about to see it with the physical eye or contact it with external things. When I practiced with Luangpor, he helped me by pointing out and giving directions to use the method of developing awareness through movements.

At first, I felt it was very difficult because I didn't understand the language of the mind that Luangpor was regularly using, and I wasn't familiar with his accent as well. I was constantly enveloped in not-knowing. It was many years before I found this way. He would teach groups, many people together, after the chanting. Sometimes he would teach after the morning and midday meal as well. This was in order to

motivate and warn the practitioners, and to strengthen their confidence. The teaching that he tried to emphasize over and over again was to understand Rupa-Nama and to be aware. If anyone could maintain awareness well and was diligent in practice, he would stay in close contact.

He was determined in teaching; he really aimed at letting the practitioners understand the Truth. He wanted those who were interested to have awareness and wisdom to solve the problems of life, to really extinguish the suffering in daily life. He has been putting effort into this matter ever since I first met him. He never slackened his efforts. He was diligent in giving Dhamma-talks, receiving visitors and answering questions asked regularly asked by those who were interested. Those who practiced depended on listening to his teachings. Many days and many times, the mind that use to think about the past and wander to the future, would gradually be forgotten. Awareness would begin to know the present, step by step. The mind would continuously think about the teachings. Whatever one did or said, the mind would think about the teachings continuously. To listen often was a good inspiration. And then to practice accordingly. Results started to appear in a way that the practitioner was not aware of.

One would accept the truth of the teachings more. Sometimes one would be at loggerheads with the teachings; many times, when first practicing, there would be contention in one's mind. Or sometimes, one would analyze the teachings in various ways. Looking back at it, afterwards, one realized that attachment to views and opinions hadn't lessened in a year of practice.

There was no external work; there was only practice. During that period, Luangpor's health was still good, he had little illness. Besides giving talks, he would be an example in putting forth effort every day, in front of his hut. That would

give people spiritual strength; he didn't just talk (about practice). It was a kind of teaching by his actions and his way of being. I felt that it was heartening and encouraging to see and be close to 'one who knows.'

That year, most of the practitioners were confident and inspired; and they were determined to really practice. There were hardly any obstacles in living together. When practicing onwards, knowledge arose from listening. Reflection and the results of practice would follow, until one felt surprised with the knowledge that occurred while making movements. One never knew or had this 'knowing' before. The 'Now' would be more distinct. Before, one used to hear the urging to be a lot with the present moment, but one could not do it yet. But as soon as one lived more in the now an saw the present more, one knew straight away that 'things are like this!' This is what being in the present moment means!

One felt confident in practice; and there was no discouragement because one saw the changes in the mind. Feeling arose in the postures of the body: in sitting, standing, walking and lying down, and in the minor movements. It happens naturally when one keeps watching. One would depend on the movements, but it takes quite a bit of time before changes in the mind start to take place.

Listening and practicing continuously is very good; whether one knows or not, remembers or not, one listens and practices without stopping, and one will see the results for oneself, until it becomes a habit and one gets used to it.

Luangpor had many forms of teaching. Sometimes he would challenge people to prove that what he said was true. He guaranteed what he said. This urged us on to want to know, even more. It added to our efforts and led us not to be fed up with practice. We would hear often that 'practice would be natural and one would know and see for oneself.' I used to

doubt a lot about these things; but now, those doubts have long since disappeared.

He would make us think; he would teach in riddles* and the listener would try to figure it out. His intention was to be confronted with thought, to know and see thought, because thought is something important. The more one practiced and listened, the fewer doubts one would have; but new and strange thoughts would come up, interesting thoughts to look at! The mind that used to be heavy was now light; the mind that used to be in turmoil now was empty. The mind changed a lot from how it was before. One reflected and reviewed one's actions, speech and thoughts in the past. They were coming from basic instincts; there was only a small quantity of knowing. Next, one could observe that sometimes there was no quality of knowing at all; one would do things clearly forgetting oneself. One saw these truths through observing oneself, from the beginning of practice.

I've read and heard people talk about seeing thought, seeing the mind, seeing stages, seeing the state of arising/passing, but the real thing that arises and passes I haven't seen. On seeing and knowing thought, it stops; on seeing thought it doesn't fabricate any further. Or, if it does, one sees and understands it. This knowledge arises from meditation; it is called 'meditative-wisdom'**. I understood what the teacher was trying to say.

The views and opinions with which I used to argue in my mind, thinking that 'I knew,' disappeared, and a sense of shame arose for my own actions. I didn't know the truth. From then on, until this day, I saw the un-satisfactoriness and

*People who knew him, sometimes compared him with a Zen master.

**This is the third level of wisdom, the first one is 'book-wisdom,' and the second 'reflective-wisdom.'

bad result of not knowing the truth, of forgetting oneself and losing awareness. This is something to be afraid of; it is really frightening; The most dangerous enemy is thought unseen, to not see one's own mind!

When we build up the quality of knowing and 'shake up' the element of knowing, which already exists within to be awakened and activated by listening and being introduced in the method by 'one who knows,' this knowing will arise in the crude postures of sitting, standing, walking and lying down. When this knowing gradually accumulates, one knows all movements. This is not the kind of knowing that comes from thinking and guessing; it really comes from practicing. One knows little by little, in a quiet way; it is very refined. Later, this knowing expands more and more and one has full awareness pervading the whole body. Wherever one goes, one automatically knows. Whether one fixes the mind or not, one knows. One comprehends Rupa-Nama. One knows the eyes blinking, one knows the breathing. All this just happens by itself. One doesn't have to particularly fix on the breath; but one depends on the continuity of the practice, starting with the walking-meditation and watching the 'outer' movements, which are the base for the more refined levels of awareness. Until ones sees thought.

When one sees thought, when one sees the origin of suffering, suffering diminishes. Wisdom-knowledge arises; the things one doubted about disappear. One understands 'objective matter, ultimate meaning and changing conditions' as Luangpor teaches. This knowledge and understanding is something that one has never experienced before in life. One might call it 'a new spiritual birth.' My mind has changed a lot from before; I have confidence and respect for the Buddha who discovered the excellent Dhamma. Hi is fit to be the world-teacher. And I have confidence and respect for Luangpor

Teean, who is like a candle,* illuminating the way to develop awareness, so one may find ‘the new life’ and be self-confident in studying and practicing, using movements as the method.

I would like to insist that this is really a way to extinguish suffering and problems in daily life. Even though we may not know when we come to practice, we're blind, have lots of desires and can't control our minds, which creates suffering; no matter how many days, months or years we may have suffered, there is no need to talk about and be interested in suffering, but try out the method of developing awareness by using movements. Really do it! Do it with confidence, according to what the teacher teaches; and when awareness and wisdom are strong and sharp enough, they will naturally do their duty of extinguishing suffering.

*The word ‘Teean’ literally means ‘Candle’ in Thai.

Ajahn Mahaboo-a Torng Buddhaghosako

Luangpor's Biography as Far as I Know

Luangpor used to be the head-man of the village Boohom, but he couldn't write Thai because, in those days, there were no schools yet. He only learned the Lao script. When he was the head-man of the village, he built a school and a bridge, and he cut a road to the village. He was someone who frequently made merit; he built a ceremonial hall, and he trained himself in meditation since he was still a novice. People who live in the vicinity of Boohom village, know him very well. Luangpor was someone with position; he had a steamboat running between Chee-ang kahn and Nongkai, selling and buying goods. He was never in debt. He was a trader for many years. He reflected that rich people still have suffering, sometimes more than poor people. So he tried to find a way not to have suffering. Later, he heard that in See Chee-ang-my district, an insight-meditation retreat was held. He went to spend a rains-retreat with Ajahn Wontorng. After the rains-retreat, he opened a meditation-center at his home-village. After several years, he ordained. He stayed one year with the head-monk of the district, who was his preceptor. After that, he sometimes stayed in Laos, until he met me in 1964. He then had a chance to talk about the Dhamma; and since then, more and more people got to know his method of practice, up to the present day.

Meeting Luangpor For The First Time And What Happened

1964 was the year that I stayed at a cave-monastery for one month. I was from a different sect as the monks there and so had to be out of the way on the observance days. It is rather ridiculous to have such discriminations. I reflected that the Dhamma can not be divided into North and South, black or white. I decided to go back to the 'owl-cliff.'

It just happened that I had run out of money and so couldn't take a bus. I thought about the old monk at a nearby monastery; we used to meet every morning, going on alms-round, he on one route and I on another. This old monk was no other than our Luangpor Teean. In the evening, I carried my bowl and umbrella out of the cave-monastery, over to where he was staying. When I arrived he was chatting with Luangpor Pet. I put my stuff down and paid respects to both of them. Luangpor asked me, 'Where do you come from?' I answered: 'I come from the cave-monastery.' 'How long have you ordained?' Loo-ang further inquired. 'Five years.' I said. Having heard that, Luangpor picked up a kettle with hot water, put it in front of me and bowed to me. I raised my hands and said, 'No need to do that, Luangpor.' Luangpor said with a North-eastern accent, 'Never mind', and laughed. 'I've been a monk for four years and Luangpor six,' pointing at Luangpor Pet.

The number of rains-retreats of the three of us were neatly arranged. He asked me further, 'What have you come for and where are you going?' I told him my story and asked him for some money for the bus, so I could go and practice at the 'owl-cliff.' He said: 'Why don't we stay together here? We can each do our own practice. Whoever finds the truth

first, will tell the others. The chances are about eighty percent.' When I heard him say eighty percent, I thought to myself with confidence, 'We've got to try this out!'

Having met Lo-ang por two days, I started training myself with the rhythmic-meditation. After the chanting, Luangpor would normally give a talk to the monks and novices, in the morning as well as in the evening. After that, we would disperse and go to our individual meditation-huts.

At that time, I wasn't determined to practice yet; I just did it so I wouldn't forget the sequence of movements. I thought, 'Tomorrow, I will do my utmost!' As soon as I had thought this, an image arose, I clearly saw myself sitting at one side of the bed. But I didn't have a head; just my body from the neck downwards. This made me palpitate with terror for a moment, and I forgot all about the rhythmic-meditation. After that, I didn't think about anything because it was already quite late. I just thought, 'Tomorrow, I'm going to give it my best.'

The next day, after the meal, Luangpor came to see me. He asked, 'How are things going?' I told him, 'I don't know anything yet, Luangpor, but last night, an image arose of myself without a head, which only made me feel brokenhearted.' Luangpor said, 'Show me how you do the rhythmic-meditation, Ajahn.' I showed him. He pointed out to me to reflect on what is what, 'Are the movements materiality and mentality?' I considered this for a while and answered him, 'Yes.' Luangpor said further, 'What is blinking the eyes, breathing and thinking? Reflect on this!' Having finished saying that, he walked out of the room, saying, 'Reflect on it well!'

That day, I sat practicing the rhythmic-meditation and reflected on movements, all day long. I understood Rupa-Nama, and also the three characteristics. Blinking the eyes, breathing and thought are Rupa and Nama. They are unstable,

impermanent and not-self; they arise and pass away. All postures are the same. I felt satisfied with Luangpor's advice. I understood Rupa-Nama clearly. Take just this much as the object of insight; knowing more than this is the knowledge that is due to the defilements of insight and analytical knowledge. Three days later, Luangpor said to look at the mind, work with the mind. I did this for a full two months and understood the stage of ultimate meaning. To know this stage doesn't mean that one has no more defilements; one just knows the beginning of the path, that the individual who will be free from defilements must walk this path. One should see those things that are obstructions and avoid them. Don't analyze, or one will fall into the trap of thought. One will not meet the unity of mind that way. It is more difficult to understand and 'be' for someone who has studied a lot. So I was very satisfied with the practice and Luangpor's advice. What I'm relating now are just a few aspects of the practice.

Working with the mind is to watch the mind thinking. When it thinks, one knows; when there is not thought, one knows also. One practices the rhythmic-meditation at the same time. This helps not to feel sleepy.

In the old days, Luangpor didn't speak much. Once, he taught us by taking two match sticks and putting them with the heads together and drawing a line with his finger, touching a match, so that they would separate, saying at the same time, 'See how they are separated!' I practiced for two months and felt awake.

Luangpor's Conduct

Luangpor was a monk who lived simply; he could adapt to all levels of society. He was an ordinary old monk, but someone like Luangpor is hard to find. Even his disciples couldn't really follow his example. When it was time for a rest, both at night as well as in the day-time, whoever had questions could go and see him any time. He would be ready for you always.

Luangpor's Daily Activities

One daily activity that Luangpor never missed was to do walking-meditation. Normally, Luangpor would go to sleep around nine or ten o'clock at night and get up at three or four o'clock A.M. When his health was still good, he used to do walking-meditation in the morning as well as the evening, without fail.

What Impressed Me About Luangpor

Luangpor was an old monk who couldn't read or write, but he was able to lead people to the ‘other shore’ of Buddhadhamma in an astonishing way.

Luangpor was able to talk about and make us understand the method to look at the mind or how to work with the mind, which is different from other teachers, who talk about working with the mind by thinking a lot. But Luangpor says that working with the mind is to watch the mind and thought. Not to follow thought, but to be aware that one is thinking a lot or

little. He teaches staying with awareness, with the movements, which prevents drowsiness.

I'm impressed with the practice that he taught. He introduced us into building up awareness all the time. This awareness turns into the weapon of wisdom that cuts off suffering. To put it simply, just doing the rhythmic-meditation destroys the deepest worldliness and makes it tasteless in the practicing person's mind. When this no longer exists in one's mind, peace immediately arises.

The Situation at The Buddhayana Forest

The Buddhayana forest was established in 1966. Six or seven of us got together there. That year Ajahn Mahakeum came to practice also. He had a deep understanding of the Dhamma, and he was reckoned to be an important disciple of Luangpor. At the end of 1966, Luangpor Boontam came to practice as well. Later, Luangpor Kamkee-an followed. He ordained in 1967. The year after that, Luangpor Torng and many others came. I stayed until 1969 and then left to study herbal medicines in Ubon province.

Luangpor's Most Important Rains-Retreat

In 1964, two scholar monks with titles came to practice with Luangpor. Another five monks had lesser degrees. In 1966-1967 there were many monks. After 1964, the important disciples of Luangpor were: Ajahn Kampun, Ajahn Boontam, Ajahn Kamkee-an and Ajahn Torng, most of whom are still alive today.

An Important Event

In the year 1965, which was the year when I spent the reins retreat with Luangpor at Boohom village, a government official had a misunderstanding and thought that Luangpor was teaching beliefs contrary to Buddhism. He came to investigate, check things out, but he couldn't discover any proof of this. So, in the end, he understood that Luangpor really taught the Dhamma. This is a common thing; anyone who has never listened to Luangpor before, would be a bit shaken up by what he said.

An Account of The Day That Luangpor Passed Away

The day that Luangpor passed away, was Tuesday, the 13th of September 1988, nearly on the same day that he was born (Tuesday, the 5th of September). He showed his disciples and the lay-people the method to die in stages, as follows:

At four o'clock in the afternoon, he told his grand-child to get things ready. A novice came running over to tell me that Luangpor's condition was serious, and that we should get ready.

That day there were only two senior disciples, namely Luangpor Boontam and Luangpor Sommai. Together with me and about twenty-one monks and novices, twenty-five lay-woman, nine laymen, and six nuns, we were a group of over sixty people.

When I arrived, it was 5:20 P.M. Luangpor could still raise his arms normally. I playfully touched his leg with my hand and it appeared that it was already cool, up to the waist. At 5:24 P.M. Luangpor moved his hand to his navel and put his

other hand on top of it. Then he moved his right hand to his chest, and out, to the side. He then lowered his arm, turned down the palm and did the same with his left hand. He did the rhythmic-meditation at this time!

I looked at my watch: 5:33 P.M. His right hand was still at his stomach because his right hand was really heavy, it was hard to lift because it was completely swollen. Luangpor still tried to lift it.

Next, he moved his left hand on top of his right and moved his right hand to his chest, he then continued with his left hand. At 5:40 P.M. he opened his eyes and looked at everyone who was near him. He moved his left hand to his chest and then down again to his stomach. He normally kept lowering and raising his hand like this. At 5:42 P.M. he put both his arms beside him, and for a third time, he watched those who were around him.

It was 5:45 P.M., a lay-person from Bangkok came in time to see Luangpor's method of dying. Luangpor then joined his hands together at his chest and moved them to his navel. Then he bent his right leg, so that the knee pointed upwards and stretched it out again, doing the same with his left leg. He alternated these movements two times, all the time looking at those around him. This was at 5:50 P.M.

At 5:55 P.M., he moved his left hand to his navel and moved it outwards. When it was six o'clock, he covered his right hand with his left one and five minutes later he moved his left hand a little bit away from his right hand. At a quarter past six, he clutched his hands at his chest, moved them to his abdomen and opened his eyes wide. His hands stayed where they were.

Finally, he rested his arms beside him and at the same time breathed his last breath in a really peaceful and cool way. I couldn't hold the tears back through excitement. I both felt

glad at Luangpor's behavior, which is something that is hard to see, and also felt sad that myself, I was still stuck in many things.

I missed the disciples of Luangpor, I wanted to see everyone again.

Conclusion

THE RHYTHMIC MEDITATION



Sit upright, the hands resting on the knees and the eyes open. One may move the eyes as is natural. It is not necessary to fix them on one point or to look down.

First movement



Slowly turn up the right hand and feel the sensations that arise in the arm and the hands as you do so. When the movement is completed, be aware that you stop.

Second movement



Raise the arm half-way the body; be aware of the feeling. Pause for about a second before moving on and know the point where the arm comes to a halt. Relax.

Third movement



Move the hand in a straight line to the abdomen,
experiencing the movement with awareness,
but don't concentrate; just acknowledge the feeling.

Fourth movement



Turn up the left hand. While moving the hand, you know that it is moving; when stopping, you know that you are stopping. Don’t verbalize this in your mind.

Fifth movement



Raise the left arm half-way up, contacting the sensation of it. Do not count the movements or recite any mantras or words internally; just feel it. It is very simple.

Sixth movement



Put the left hand on top of the right hand. Do you feel the movement? Also notice the hands touching each other and the coming to a standstill of the move.

Seventh movement



Re-establish awareness as you're moving the right hand to the chest. Every movement and pause is an opportunity to re-new your awareness. Touch the chest.

Eighth movement



Move the right hand out, to the side and let it be there for a moment, knowing the movement as well as the stopping. Do the movements feeling at ease.

Nineth movement



Lower the right arm to the knee with the hand upright. Just be aware of one movement at the time; one moment at the time - from moment to moment to moment.

Tenth movement



Turn down the palm of the hand. Keep the eyes open all the time. Don't fix or focus on one particular part of the body; just know what's happening with it.

Eleventh movement



**If stray-thoughts made you lose awareness,
just come back to this movement of rubbing the left hand
up to the chest and of stopping there before moving on.**

Twelfth movement



Move the left hand over to the side, experiencing the beginning, middle and end of the movement clearly. Fully aware, without the mind labeling or fabricating.

Thirteenth movement



If sensations arise in other parts of the body, such as breathing, the eyes blinking etc., be aware of that also as you're lowering the arm to the knee.

Fourteenth movement



When you turn down the hand, you are again in the same position that you started from, and from there you continue with a new cycle, continuously.

Developing Awareness in Daily Life

In developing awareness, one should practice much and often. One can do it while sitting, lying down, and even while riding in a car or boat. For example, when we sit in a car or a bus, we can put our hand on the knee and turn the hand up and down. Or, if we don't like doing that we just touch the thumb with the fingers, gently and slowly rubbing them against each other, or alternate the movements of making a fist and opening the hand, continuously. This makes us awake (and aware).

To practice 'all the time' means to feel and be aware – while washing clothes, cleaning the floor, doing the dishes, writing and buying and selling, etc. Just to 'feel' is enough. But the moments of awareness accumulate little by little. It is like having a cup, a bucket or some kind of container. Whenever it rains, the little raindrops fall into the cup or bucket, collect there and, in the end, the container is filled.

Developing awareness in daily life is the same: we are aware of the movements of the feet and hands. When we lie down we make a fist and stretch out the hand repeatedly until we fall asleep. When we wake up we continue. Practice like this a lot. This is called developing awareness.

The Translator

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This book is probably the most succinct, accurate, practical and easily understandable approach to the Buddha's teaching on the sure realisation of Nibbhana (Enlightenment) through the practice of mindfulness. In this teaching, Luangpor Teean, a basically illiterate and uncomplicated layman of rural Northeastern Thailand, through his own awareness, brilliantly and effectively found complete Liberation from suffering. He taught his wife, family and friends, ordained as a monk, and undertook three decades of teaching this effective practice. His method has been welcomed and become widespread within Thailand, and now to other parts of the world; and, needless to say, Luangpor Teean is now recognised as one of the great and brilliant teachers of the 2,500 years of Buddhist history.

The method is disarmingly simple: one simply watches movements of the body with pure, uncomplicated present moment awareness which, after assiduous practice, leads to continuous and spontaneous awareness and dismissal of the intrusion of one's thoughts, their misleading tricks and devices, their delusional power, their ability to lead the mind toward unhealthy ego identity, and thus toward unhealthy dissatisfaction, desire, and grasping. Once this is spontaneously recognised, the mind moves effortlessly toward complete release from all this baggage, and thus it experiences release, Nibbhana.

This brilliant collection of some of Luangpor Teean's most important instructive talks was effectively compiled and translated by Phra Tone Jinavamso. NORMALITY offers modern English-speaking people a first, rare, and effective method of practicing the Buddha's teaching here and now in the midst of this our busy, modern world.

-------- Dr. Dave James